THE

Chriſtian's Prayer Book;

OR,

Complete Manual

OF

DEVOTIONS.

In FOUR PARTS

CONTAINING

Introductory Diſcourſe on the Uſe and Advantage of Prayer.—Ejaculatious for the Morning,—Family Prayers.——Prayers for Children, for Youth, and for Servants.——Graces before and after Meat.———Inſtructions for Meditation, and Meditations for every Day in the Week.——Devout Reflections for every Day in the Month.——Heads of Self-Examination.—A Compendium of relative Duties.——Offices for ſick Perſons, and for the devout receiving the HOLY COMMUNION, &c. &c. &c.

With a great Number of PRAYERS and MEDITATIONS, adapted to particular STATIONS, PERSONS, and CIRCUMSTANCES.

By the Rev. JOHN FLEETWOOD, D. D.

AUTHOR OF

The HISTORY of the HOLY BIBLE;

AND OF

The LIFE of Our BLESSED SAVIOUR.

And all things whatſoever ye ſhall aſk in prayer, believing, ye ſhall receive. Matt. xxii. 22.

Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. James v. 13.

The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. James v. 16.

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INTRODUCTION.

IF we conſider ourſelves only as creatures dependent on the bounty of a great and all-merciful Creator, a God "in whom "we live, move, and have our being," there will appear to be the higheſt reaſon why we ſhould daily lift up our hearts in humble thankfulneſs for his paſt mercies, and in devout applications for his aſſiſtance in time to come; but if we farther conſider that we have received the higheſt obligations from God, being by his good providence brought into the world, and protected from the many ills and dangers to which we are daily expoſed; that God has been our ſupport in health, and our comfort in ſickneſs; that we are daily tranſgreſſing againſt him, and yet are not puniſhed according to our tranſgreſſions; that God can receive no advantage from us, and that the various bleſſings which he beneficently beſtows upon us, are mere effects of his own unbounded and unfathomable goodneſs: what additional reaſons

ſhall we not have to lift up our hearts to heaven in pious gratitude for paſt bleſſings; and our longing eyes in humble hope of future.—But once more let us conſider the matter as it really ſtands, let us look upon ourſelves as beings created perfect, but who have "ſought "out many inventions;" let us conſider that when we had fallen from our allegiance from our king and ſovereign, when by our innumerable ſins and tranſgreſſions we had juſtly forfeited all pretenſions to the Divine mercy, and rendered ourſelves obnoxious to his juſtice and his wrath; when our accumulated crimes and tranſgreſſions had rendered us worthy of eternal puniſhment; that the God of all mercy ſhould then ſend his only begotten ſon to take upon him our likeneſs, and, cloathed in a garment of fleſh, to ſuffer all manner of inſults from thoſe very wretches that he was come to ſave; and finally, to offer himſelf up a propitiatory ſacrafice to redeem us from the conſequences of our tranſgreſſions, and to die the ignominious and painful death of the croſs, that ſuch as believed in him might live for ever in the manſions of ineffable bliſs, being admitted to celebrate the praiſes of their God and Redeemer to all eternity: if we conſider things in this light, I ſay, what ſuper-added motives ſhall we not have, for a conſtant and devout worſhip of the Divine Author of ſuch aſtoniſhing, ſuch unſpeakable comforts and bleſſings.

As

As the deſign of the following book is to aſſiſt the devout and humble Chriſtian in his daily approach to the Divine preſence, and as that prayer of our Saviour, which we uſually diſtinguiſh by the name of the "Lord's "Prayer," contains the ſum and ſubſtance of all our addreſſes to God, and is the great ground-work from which Chriſtians have formed their prayers in all ages ſince the time of Chriſt's aſcenſion into heaven, it may not be improper to give the reader a ſhort comment on that Divine compoſition.

OUR Father, which art in Heaven; Hallowed be thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done in Earth, As it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our treſpaſſes, As we forgive them that treſpaſs againſt us. And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil: For thine is the Kingdom, And the Power, and the Glory, For ever and ever. *Amen.*

Our Father,] What infinite obligations are we under to the paternal goodneſs of God, who has permitted us miſerable and offending creatures to approach his ſacred preſence, and addreſs him by the endearing epithet of *Father*, thereby manifeſting his love and regard for us, and teaching us that we ought always to look up to him for thoſe bleſſings which he alone is both able and willing to beſtow on us. But there is yet another conſideration which

renders the obligation ſtill ſtronger; for, to uſe the emphatical language of Scripture, If we are children we are "then heirs; heirs of "God, and joint-heirs with Chriſt." What a noble diſtinction! what a grand co-heirſhip! God grant that our own endeavours may be at all times moſt ſtrenuouſly exerted, that with the aſſiſtance of his Divine grace, our actions may daily render us leſs and leſs unworthy of the Divine relation, which we are here allowed to claim.

Which art in heaven,] Though the Almighty Creator and Governor of the univerſe is every where, and at all times preſent; yet is he more peculiarly reſident in the heaven of heavens, the eternal abode of his Majeſty and Glory, from whence he looketh down to behold the works of the children of men, and where he is continually ſurrounded with innumerable hoſts of angels, who are employed in the divineſt offices of praiſe, and continually offering up their devouteſt adorations to "him "who ſitteth upon the throne, and to the "Lamb for ever and ever." May the holy ſpirit of God ſo aſſiſt the readers of this book, that they may be in ſome meaſure made partakers of the ſame divine employment while here on earth, and when all things earthly ſhall be done away, may they enter into the preſence of their God, and join the bliſsful choir to all eternity.

Hallowed be thy name.] This phraſe comprehends the whole duty of praiſe; giving Glory to

to the name of God, and uſing our utmoſt endeavours that others may be induced to join us in ſo rational a part of devotion. Extremely abſurd, as well as wicked, is it for thoſe who uſe theſe words in their prayers, to take the "name of the Lord their God in "vain;" and indeed thoſe perſons who habituate themſelves to the abominable cuſtom of ſwearing, do but aggravate their offences when they repair to the place of divine ſervice, and join in the public prayers to God, that he would enable us to "hallow his holy name." The Greek word, which we tranſlate Name, ſignifies alſo Power, ſo that taking the phraſe in this ſenſe, it will ſignify, Enable us, O God, to pay a proper and a devout reſpect to thine unbounded power, by which all things were at firſt created, as they are now preſerved by thy goodneſs.

Thy kingdom come.] This ought to be the fervent prayer of every devout Chriſtian; for although we ſhould be contented to live in this troubleſome world till it ſhall pleaſe Almighty God of his infinite mercy, through our bleſſed Saviour, to diſcharge us from the incumbrances of ſin and mortality; yet there can be no impropriety in our offering up our daily and fervent petitions at the throne of mercy, that God would accompliſh the gracious purpoſes of his will, and haſten the coming of that kingdom, where all impunity ſhall be done away, and the "ſpirits of the juſt made "perfect." But there is alſo another ſenſe in which

which theſe words may be taken: if, by the coming of the kingdom of God, we underſtand the converſion of the Jews and Pagans to the faith and profeſſion of Chriſtianity, and the uniting all the nations of the earth in the only true worſhip of God, it ought certainly to be our daily and earneſt requeſt, that this happy time may be haſtened, and that thoſe who ſit in darkneſs may be illuminated with the glorious light of the goſpel, and made partakers with us, in the ineſtimable bleſſings ariſing from a covenant with God, through faith in his ſon Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.

Thy will be done in Earth, as it is in heaven.] Although we cannot ſuppoſe that the worſhip of God can be performed in ſo pure and devout a manner, by ſinful mortals, clogged and hindered as we are by all the impediments of mortality, as by the bleſſed angels of light; yet we may in a great meaſure, by the aſſiſtance of the Holy Spirit, be enabled to perform our duty to God, and "do his will on earth," in the ſame manner, though not in the ſame degree of perfection as "it is done in heaven:" and the more and greater we find our difficulties, and the more impediments we find to the juſt and proper performance of the will of our heavenly father, the more earneſt ought we to be in our ſolicitations to God for that aſſiſtance, without which our beſt offerings, our pureſt ſacrifices will be altogether unworthy the divine acceptance. Let us, therefore, make it our daily and conſtant prayer that God

God would enable us to accommodate all our thoughts and actions to his divine will, that we may enjoy a heaven on earth, and participate while here in ſome degree of that pure and devout worſhip, which will be the bleſſed employment of beatified ſpirits hereafter.

Give us this day our daily bread,] To God the author of all mercies are we to look up for a daily ſupply of the various bounties of his providence, which we are always to uſe with moderation, and for which, at all times, we ought to be moſt devoutly thankful. Let not the rich man pride himſelf in the greatneſs of his poſſeſſions, and thereby be tempted to forget that God from whom he received the bleſſing, remembering, that he who gives, is at all times able to take away, and that though he rolls in abundance to-day, he may, by various accidents, be reduced to want and penury by to-morrow: neither let the ſon of poverty be caſt down and afflicted; but aſſure himſelf, that, if his own endeavours are not wanting, the great Father of the univerſe will ſtill ſupply him with all things that are fit and convenient for him; and let people of all ranks duly conſider, that it is by a decent and proper uſe of the bounties of Providence, and not by the abuſe of them, that they will moſt probably inſure to themſelves a continuance of them. Let the great and the affluent alſo be taught that a generous diſtribution of their poſſeſſions among the poor and needy, is highly acceptable in the ſight of that God, who giveth libe-

rally to thoſe who ſtand in need, and "whoſe "tender mercies are over all his works."

And forgive us our treſpaſſes, as we forgive them that treſpaſs againſt us.] It is highly reaſonable that our forgiving one another whatever faults we may have been guilty of, ought to be the condition upon which we ſeek forgiveneſs from God; for the man who is backward in forgiving his neighbour, can with no face pretend to aſk forgiveneſs for himſelf; but I would not be underſtood to inſinuate, that though we ſhould forgive our fellow-creatures in every poſſible caſe in which they can offend againſt us, yet that a ſufficient reaſon can thencefrom ariſe, for God to forgive us—no—we have offended againſt our Maker in a higher degree than it is poſſible for one man to offend againſt another, and in our addreſſes to the Almighty and All-merciful, we are to uſe the prevailing argument of the unbounded merits of that Saviour who has ſuffered for us, and "riſen again for our juſtifi-"cation;" and on his account alone to hope for pardon.

And lead us not into temptation.] Let no one from this petition conclude, that God leads us into temptation: the meaning of it is, permit us not, O God, to be led away by the ſinful and corrupt inclinations of our own hearts; permit not the great deluder to take advantage of our diſpoſition to rebel againſt thee, and ſo lead us into temptation; but ſo fortify us by the ſtrengthening power of thy grace, againſt

all

all the aſſaults of the world, the fleſh and the devil, that we may hold faſt our integrity, and be enabled to ſerve thee faithfully to the end of our lives.

But deliver us from evil.] Man is ſo liable to fall into every kind of evil without the Divine aſſiſtance, that he has the greateſt reaſon to be conſtantly praying to the God of all goodneſs, that he would deliver him from evil. What poor and helpleſs creatures are we, without the Divine aſſiſtance; how eaſily do we yield to every kind of temptation! how quickly are we ſeduced, and how prone are all our ſteps to evil! frequent and earneſt ought we therefore to be, in offering up this petition to heaven, which implies not only a deliverance from all evil, but the being led into the paths of righteouſneſs; ſince to thoſe from whom evil is abſent, good muſt neceſſarily be preſent; when, therefore, we ſay "deliver us from evil," we beg the aſſiſtance of God's holy ſpirit to lead us into the paths of righteouſneſs, and ſo to conduct our ſteps, that we may ſtill advance nearer and nearer to that bliſsful ſtate where all ſin and ſorrow ſhall be done away, and all be happineſs, ſatisfaction and peace!

For thine is the Kingdom,] Not only the kingdom of this world, but all the hoſts of heaven are ſubject to the uncontroulable dominion of God. Philoſophers are of opinion that the ſun, the moon and the ſtars are ſo many worlds, peopled by the power, and ſupported by the goodneſs of God! What a ſtupendous idea

does this give us of the magnificence of the great Creator! Let a perſon only ſuppoſe himſelf an inhabitant of one of thoſe diſtant Regions which we behold in the Firmament, let him there look arround him, and count the many myriads of inhabitants, with which that Word is peopled, and then let him extend his views, through the immenſities of infinite ſpace, every part of which abounds in proofs of the wonderful greatneſs of the Creator, and he will have abundant reaſon to cry out in holy rapture, O Lord, thine *is* the kingdom.

And the power,] As all creation affords abundant proofs of the goodnèſs, ſo does it of the power of God; to which we are indebted for our preſervation againſt a thouſand dangers which ſurround us, and which is not more manifeſted in the creation of angels and of men, than in that of the beaſts of the earth, the fiſhes of the ſea, the birds of the air, or the ſmalleſt inſect that we tread under our feet. The ſame power that gave life to a fly or a worm, can give life to a thouſand worlds; the ſame act of omnipotence, the ſame Almighty Fiat can command into being, or totally annihilate at his ſovereign will and pleaſure. From theſe conſiderations let us be at all times ready to acknowledge the power of that God, of which the whole univerſe affords ſuch abundant proofs.

And the Glory,] As all power, ſo all glory belongs to God alone. To admire at his power, to rejoice in his goodneſs, and to glorify his name, is the beſt employment both of angels and

and of men. When we ſay, "thine, O Lord, "is the Glory," we mean that the name of God ought to be magnified above all things, that all praiſe is due to him alone, and that all we conceive of the grandeur of any of his creatures, ſinks into nothing on a compariſon with the magnificence of the great Creator.

For ever and ever.] This means not only to the end of time, to the final period of this periſhable earth, but alſo through the endleſs ages of all eternity.

Amen.] That is as much as to ſay, ſo be it. It is a ſort of ſolemn recital of all that we have been ſaying, and an earneſt petition that our prayers may be rendered acceptable in the ſight of God, and all our petitions be granted, through the merits and mediation of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.

A preparatory Prayer.

O Moſt Holy, moſt great and glorious Lord God Almighty, who permitteſt us thine unworthy ſervants to offer up our prayers unto thee; grant that we may approach thy preſence with humble reverence and due attention of mind: permit not, we beſeech thee, our thoughts to wander from our duty, but raiſe our affections, that theſe our prayers and ſupplications may become acceptable unto thee, through the merits and interceſſion of Jeſus Chriſt our Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*

A Petition

A Petition to obtain the true Spirit of Prayer.

O Moſt great and glorious, moſt holy and moſt merciful God, look down upon us we beſeech thee with an eye of tenderneſs and compaſſion. Thou, Lord, haſt promiſed that thoſe who aſk ſhall receive; hear now, therefore, our petitions in the abundance of thy mercy, and let us rejoice in the fulfillment of thy promiſes. Inſtruct us, O Lord, to pray as we ought, and let thy gracious ſpirit aſſiſt us in making our ſupplications unto thee.

Give us a juſt and proper ſenſe of thine infinite majeſty, and of our neceſſary dependence upon thee, as often as we appear in thy ſacred preſence; that whenever we proſtrate ourſelves before thee, our whole ſouls may be filled with humble reverence, and we may be kept from all diſturbances and wanderings of mind.

We acknowledge, O Lord, our weakneſs and infirmity in this neceſſary exerciſe of our duty; too frequently do we manifeſt a diſreſpect in our outward behaviour, and we addreſs our God with our lips, while our hearts are far from him. By this means our prayers are imperfect, our thoughts are broken and confuſed, and the rovings of our mind carry us away far from thee.

How wretched is our ſituation, O Lord, that our very prayers, which ſhould, through thy mercy, tend to blot out our ſins, do but increaſe the number of our tranſgreſſions; and

provoke

provoke thy wrath inſtead of exciting thy mercy. But as we are ſenſible of this our unhappineſs, and are ready moſt humbly to confeſs our failings before thee; have mercy upon us, and grant us a better ſpirit for the future; have regard unto our ſorrows, and let our cries come up unto thee. Behold, O Lord, we now ſeek thy help, and intreat thy moſt gracious aſſiſtance, that our prayers may be acceptable in thy ſight.

Enlighten our underſtandings, confirm our wandering minds, and give us a juſt apprehenſion of the weight of our eternal concerns; that our ſouls may be ever longing for the practice of our duty, in continually offering up our petitions to thee: that we may deſire thy grace with an earneſtneſs above what we expreſs for earthly concerns; and may at all times fervently pray for thoſe things which are neceſſary for our eternal ſalvation; and thus daily advance in that road which leads to the compleat poſſeſſion of eternal and unchangeable bliſs.

O God in thy mercy hear our prayers, and let our cries come up unto thee; ſtretch forth the right hand of thy power to protect us from all evil. Purify our thoughts, exalt our ideas, and conſtantly inſpire us by thy grace, to do thoſe things which are moſt agreeable to thy holy will. Once more we intreat thee to hear our prayers, through the merits and mediation of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. *Amen.*

Directions for the Morning.

AS ſoon as your eyes behold the light of morning, adore that God who called up light out of darkneſs; and make a fervent offering of your perſon and ſervices to your great Creator. Exert yourſelves as much as poſſible to exclude all evil thoughts from your mind, and devote them to God, who has an undoubted right to, and expects your pureſt ſervices.

Conſider that God has watched over you while you ſlept, and carefully protected you from all the evils and dangers of the night: be not therefore ſo ungrateful as to forget his mercy; but lift up your hearts in all poſſible gratitude, and the moment you awake devote your beſt thoughts to God your preſerver; for to do otherwiſe would be the higheſt inſtance of ingratitude.

Riſe early in the morning, and pour out your ſouls in prayer to God, that he may afford you his bleſſing through the day. Never indulge yourſelf in ſloth and idleneſs, which are inconſiſtent with your duty both to God and man; but prepare yourſelves for the buſineſs of the day, by devoting the firſt part of it to the worſhip of the great Creator of Heaven and Earth.

As you are waſhing yourſelves and putting on your cloaths, entertain ſuch devout and pious thoughts as may tend to cleanſe you from the filthineſs of ſin, and to cloath you with the robe of your Saviour's righteouſneſs.

When

When you leave your chamber, remember that you are ſtepping into a wicked and corrupt world, and be upon your guard that you do not contract any of thoſe evil habits with which the ſons of men have defiled themſelves in departing from the living God.

Ejaculations for the Morning.

1. O Drowſy ſoul ariſe, ariſe thou that ſleepeſt, and Chriſt will give thee light.

2. I lift up my eyes, my hands, and my heart to thee, O God, from this bed where my body has ſafely repoſed during the dangers of the night, towards the heaven of heavens, where my ſoul expects her eternal reſt, through thine unbounded mercy.

3. In the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will exalt my voice betimes in the morning.

4. I acknowledge, O God, that I am altogether unworthy to enjoy the light of this day, having diſhonoured thy holy name on ſo many days that are paſt; much leſs do I deſerve the light of thy grace, and acknowledge that it would be juſt in thee to ſentence me to utter darkneſs, and deprive me for ever from the all-chearing light of thy countenance.

A Prayer proper to be ſaid on waking from Sleep.

O Moſt Holy, Holy, Holy, three perſons in one God, protect and defend me this day, I beſeech thee, from all the temptations and deceits of the world, the fleſh and the devil. Protect me from the dangers of life, and the terrors of ſudden death. Raiſe my ſoul from ſin, as my body from ſleep, and grant that I may continually aſcribe all honour, wiſdom, power and mercy to thy moſt holy name. *Amen.*

On firſt Riſing.

I Ariſe from my bed in the name of my crucified Saviour; Bleſs me, O Lord; govern, keep and confirm me in all good works, thro' this day, and for evermore; ſo that after this ſhort and tranſitory life, I may enjoy everlaſting happineſs in thy kingdom. *Amen.*

When you put on your Cloaths.

CLOATH, O moſt holy Jeſus, my ſinful ſoul with the robes of thy juſtice, that its ſhame may not be ſeen; and cover me with the ornaments of all Chriſtian virtues and graces. Give me, O Chriſt, the wedding garment of divine love, and enable me to live in charity with all mankind. *Amen.*

When

When you waſh your Hands and Face.

O Chriſt, who ſo lovedſt mankind as to waſh our ſouls in thy precious blood, purify my hands and heart from the filthy ſpots of ſin. O holy ſpirit of God, I moſt humbly beſeech thee to purge my lips by thy grace from all wicked and unprofitable words, that my mouth may be taught thy praiſe, and I may open my lips for the benefit of my fellow-creatures. Enlighten, O God, the eyes of my ſoul, that I may ſee clearly and diſcern aright to do thy bleſſed will. May the bleſſing of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghoſt be and remain with me, now and for ever. *Amen.*

FAMILY PRAYERS.

Ejaculations proper for the Sabbath-Day.

LET us elevate our minds to the joys of heaven, laying aſide all the cares of this world. Let us prepare ourſelves to entertain our God, and diveſt our heads of all earthly thoughts.

Let us retire from all the cares of this life, and gather together the powers of our ſoul, ſo as with all earneſtneſs to purſue the moſt neceſſary work, of ſecuring to ourſelves a place in the kingdom of heaven.

Thoſe,

Thoſe, O Lord, who ſeek not to taſte thy goodneſs are in a moſt miſerable condition, even though their ſkill can number the ſtars, and trace the ways of the heavenly luminaries. The higheſt learning conſiſts in a contemplation of his wiſdom in the higheſt pleaſure.

Enlighten us, O thou ſon of righteouſneſs, and conduct us to thy holy hill; ſend forth the rays of thy brightneſs to lead us to the tabernacle of thy love.

Accept our moſt humble thanks, O God, for all thy mercies, and in particular for the happineſs we enjoy in being allowed one day in ſeven for thy public worſhip. May all poſſible thanks be rendered for this bleſſing to God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

O God enable us, by a wiſe and devout uſe of the means of grace, to increaſe in holineſs, and righteouſneſs, and grant that by the performance of our devotions and duties in this world, we may be more and more prepared to join in thy praiſes with ſaints and angels in the next.

On the Morning of the Lord's Day.

O Holy, and moſt merciful Lord God Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, aſſiſt us to raiſe our affections to thee in a devout and proper manner. Enable us to join with the bleſſed ſpirits and ſouls of the righteous, in worſhipping him who ſitteth upon the throne, and liveth for ever and ever.

Thou,

Thou, O Lord, art worthy to receive glory and honour, and praiſe; for thou haſt created all things in heaven and in earth; and for thy pleaſure they are and were created.

Glory be to thee, O God, that thy divine love has induced thee to give being to thy creatures; and that thou loveſt all things, and hateſt not the works of thine hands.

We are truly ſenſible, O moſt gracious God, that thou doſt preſerve and protect, and bleſs, all things that thou haſt made, in a manner ſuitable to the natures thou haſt given them, and that in thee only we live, move, and have our being.

We ſincerely believe, that by thy wiſdom thou doſt order, diſpoſe, and govern all things, in ſuch manner as beſt to diſplay thy glory.

O Lord we beſeech thee ſo to conduct our whole lives, and animate all our conduct, that we may make conſtant and daily advances in the great end of our creation, the giving glory to thy name, and advancing the intereſt of our fellow-creatures.

We acknowledge, O Lord, that thy works are equally wonderful and amiable; we love, admire, and praiſe thy providential goodneſs, and the perpetual flow of thy kindneſs to all thy creatures.

Let all thoſe who ſhare in thy goodneſs glorify thy name, and let every thing that hath breath praiſe the Lord.

In a particular manner, O God, we admire and magnify thy goodneſs for thy ſingular lov-

ing

ing kindneſs unto us; for all thy various bleſſings beſtowed on our ſouls and bodies, from our earlieſt infancy, to the preſent time.

We have every day more and more reaſon to praiſe thy goodneſs, ſince the longer we live the more proofs we receive of thine affection towards us, and experience freſh inſtances of thine unbounded love.

We beſeech thee, O moſt adorable Majeſty of heaven and earth, to grant us ſuch a ſenſe of thy goodneſs, as may diſpoſe us to a thankful acknowledgment of thy mercies, and a zealous obedience of thy will.

We give thee our moſt hearty thanks, O God, for thy kindneſs, long ſufferance and forbearance to the people of this ſinful nation. May we, O Lord, who make a part of that number, always manifeſt a proper degree of gratitude for our ſhare in the mercies thou haſt beſtowed on the public.

We alſo magnify thy name, O Lord, for the glorious light of the goſpel of ſalvation, which thou haſt afforded unto us, while ſo great a part of the world remains in heathen darkneſs.

But above all things we offer up our unfeigned thanks for the redemption of the world by the death and ſufferings of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, who benevolently took upon him our frail nature, and died the ignominious death of the croſs, to give eternal life to us miſerable ſinners, who lay in darkneſs and the ſhadow of death. Glory be to the condeſcending majeſty of the moſt high God, and to

the Son of God, who in pity to our loſt and undone ſtate, did ſtoop ſo low as to aſſume our frail nature, and dwell among us on purpoſe to ſave us from the pains of eternal death, by offering himſelf a propitiatory ſacrafice for us.

Be merciful, O God, to all who are in affliction or diſtreſs; who heavily labour under poverty, perſecution or captivity; under bodily pains and diſeaſes, or temptations or troubles of mind; and deliver them, O Lord, according to thy great mercy.

Have mercy, O Lord, on us miſerable ſinners, who ſigh and languiſh to be at peace with thee: May thy infinite goodneſs and greatneſs be, by all men, for ever adored and magnified.

Let all the people praiſe thee, O God, yea, let all the people praiſe thee.

To God the Father who firſt loved us; to God the Son who waſhed us from our ſins in his own blood; and to God the Holy Ghoſt, who ſheds the love of God abroad in our hearts, be all honour, praiſe, glory and thankſgiving, now and for evermore. *Amen.*

Our Father, &c.

A concluding Prayer.

THE Grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; the love of God the Father, and the Communion and Fellowſhip of the Holy Ghoſt, be with us all. *Amen.*

Ejaculations

Ejaculations proper for Sunday Evening.

1. LORD, let our prayers come up before thee as incenſe, and let the lifting up of our hands be as the evening ſacrifice.

2. Let us give thanks unto the Lord, for his mercy endureth for ever.

3. O Lord thou haſt granted us thy loving-kindneſs in the day time, and therefore in the night ſeaſon we will think upon thee, and offer up our prayers to the God of our ſalvation.

4. O God, who didſt call up light out of darkneſs, open thou our eyes, that we may ſee to do thy will.

5. Bow down thine ear unto us, O God, and accept the offer of our evening ſacrifices. *Amen.*

An Evening Prayer for a Family on the Lord's Day.

ALmighty and everlaſting Lord God, the governor of all things in heaven and in earth; we beſeech the to look down upon us in mercy this evening, while we acknowledge our manifold ſins and iniquities.

We confeſs, O Lord, that we have neglected both our duty and our intereſt; we have broken thy laws, diſhonoured our moſt holy religion, and neglected the great ſalvation which our Saviour has procured and purchaſed for us.

We have attended the public worſhip in too indifferent a manner: we have paid too little attention to thy praiſes, and our prayers have been offered up without proper ſincerity.

We

We have not duly conſidered the ſtrict account we muſt ſhortly give of all our actions, before thy exact and impartial tribunal, when we ſhall depart hence and be no more ſeen. We have many ways offended thee in our thoughts, words and actions.

O merciful Father, do not thou condemn us, but pardon and ſpare us through the meritorious ſufferings of our bleſſed Redeemer.

Forgive, O Lord, all our paſt offences, direct and guide us in the ways of truth and holineſs, and reform whatever thou ſeeſt amiſs in the temper and diſpoſition of our minds.

And becauſe in this world we are ſurrounded with many temptations, enable us, we beſeech thee, by thy holy ſpirit, to ſubdue and govern our unruly paſſions, to be careful and diligent in reſiſting the leaſt motions and inclinations to ſin, and to abſtain from all appearances of evil.

Fill our minds, O Lord, with a true ſenſe of the great importance and neceſſity of working out our ſalvation, and of the ſhort time allotted to us for that purpoſe.

Help us to love thee more entirely, to ſerve thee more faithfully, and to truſt in thee more fully than we have hitherto done.

Grant us grace patiently to bear all our afflictions, chearfully to enjoy all thy bleſſings, and thankfully to praiſe thee for them.

Make us ſo to improve all thy providences both of mercy and ſeverity, that in adverſity we may not be dejected, nor in proſperity be lifted up with pride, and forget God.

We

We praiſe thee, O Lord, for the holy doctrine, exemplary life, and for the death and reſurrection of our bleſſed Saviour.

We return thee our moſt humble and hearty thanks that he hath begotten us again to the lively hope of an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, that fadeth not away, which is reſerved in heaven for all, who by a patient continuance in well doing, ſeek for glory, honour and immortality.

Accept our moſt humble thanks, O God, for the glorious aſcenſion of our Saviour into heaven, there to intercede in thy preſence for us; for ſending thy holy ſpirit to comfort and aſſiſt us, and for appointing a ſucceſſion of men to preach and propagate the knowledge and practice of his heavenly doctrine, and to adminiſter the holy ſacrament to his faithful followers.

We return thee our moſt humble and hearty thanks for all the precious promiſes in the goſpel of thy ſon; and that thou haſt made our duty ſo neceſſary to our happineſs.

Enable us, O Lord, effectually to apply our minds to the conſideration of thy manifold mercies, that they may work in our ſouls all thoſe divine virtues, diſpoſitions and affections, for which they were originally deſigned.

We humbly pray thee, O God to extend thy mercy to the whole world, that thy name may be great among the Gentiles, and thy praiſe be celebrated to the end of time.

Be gracious to theſe ſinful nations to which

we belong; forgive our many and great ſins; and particularly, we pray thee, pardon our abuſe of the time ſet apart for thy more immediate worſhip; our unthankfulneſs for the light of thy goſpel, and walking contrary to its precepts. Waſh us throughly from our iniquities, and cleanſe us from our ſins; and grant, that by unity and charity, and holineſs of life, we may glorify thy great name, and adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things. Continue the light of thy goſpel among us: defeat and overthrow the deſigns of evil men, that would pervert the truth of it.

Be thou pleaſed to further with thy bleſſing all thoſe good deſigns that are for the advancement of true religion and virtue. Let no artifices of the devil, or wicked men, render them ineffectual.

Guide and defend our moſt gracious ſovereign lord the king; let his days be many, his councils wiſe and religious, and his reign happy to himſelf and people.

Let a ſenſe of the ineſtimable value of ſouls, inſpire all biſhops and paſtors, exciting them to promote and further the ſalvation of man, by ſoundneſs of doctrine, and holineſs of life, and a due adminiſtration of thy holy ſacraments.

Let all magiſtrates, and other inferior officers, maintain and defend true religion, encouraging virtue and goodneſs, and puniſhing and ſuppreſſing all profaneneſs and ungodlineſs; and let all men follow after peace and holineſs, without which no man ſhall ſee thee.

O thou, that art the father of mercies, relieve

all that are in affliction, of any kind whatſoever; and grant that all may have cauſe to ſay, it is good for them that they have been in trouble.

Be gracious and favourable to us that are here before thee; forgive us all our ſins, and remember not our iniquities.

Defend and protect us this night from all thoſe dangers and miſchiefs that may juſtly overtake us; refreſh our frail bodies with quiet and moderate reſt, and help us in the renewed ſtrength thereof, vigorouſly to ſerve thee in the faithful diſcharge of the duties of the following day. And in that and all other days, enable us to live to thy honour and glory; that in the end of them, we may live with thee, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; in whoſe prevailing name and words, we ſum up all our wants.

Our Father, &c.

A Morning Prayer for a Family, for any other Day in the Week.

MAY the good Spirit of God diſpoſe us unto, and aſſiſt us in his ſervice.

The Lord give us all a true and lively ſenſe of our wants, of his preſence among us, and his mercy to repenting ſinners, that we may ſerve him with our hearts, as well as with our bodies; and that our prayers may be heard, for the ſake of his ſon Jeſus Chriſt our Lord. *Amen.*

O God, by whom the world is preſerved and governed; we moſt humbly adore thine infinite majeſty and perfection, praiſing thy holy name, for the continual expreſſions of thy bounty and goodneſs to us: particularly for our preſervation from

from the dangers of this night paſt, and for bleſſing us in the beginning of another day.

Thou, O Lord, art holy and bleſſed: but we are poor and miſerable ſinners: we have broken thy holy and righteous laws, ſinning wilfully after the knowledge of the truth, and the vows we have made; doing thoſe things which we knew thou haſt forbidden, and neglecting to do thoſe things thou haſt expreſsly commanded; and thereby have provoked thy wrath and indignation againſt us. But, O thou that art, by Jeſus Chriſt thy Son, reconciling the world to thyſelf, not imputing their treſpaſſes, be merciful unto us, for the ſake of that bleſſed Mediator: through his ſatisfactory obligation, O Lord, pardon all that is paſt, and give us grace to ſerve thee more faithfully for the time to come.

We acknowledge thy great patience and mercy to us, O God, in ſparing us when we deſerve puniſhment; and thy great goodneſs and bounty in giving us the neceſſaries of this life, and ſetting before us the happineſs of a better ſtate. Give us, we pray thee, ſuch a ſenſe of thy goodneſs and mercy, as may raiſe in us a conſtant indignation to all ſin, and a love and regard to all thy commandments: that as we advance in years we may grow in grace, and may be the better prepared for our latter end, the nearer we approach to it. Lord, increaſe our faith, that we may walk as in thy ſight, fearing to offend thee by any ſinful thought, word or deed: and gird upon us the whole armour of thee our God, that we vanquiſh all the temptations of the world, the fleſh, and the devil. Make us an houſhold

fearing God, ſubmitting ourſelves to thy good pleaſure, and putting our whole truſt in thy mercy.

Grant us the continual conduct of thy good ſpirit, that we may live as it becometh thy bleſſed goſpel; being upright in our hearts, ſavoury in our ſpeeches, and unblameable in our lives. Make us diligent and proſperous in our lawful buſineſs relating to this life: and ſuffer not our worldly concerns to diminiſh our heavenly-mindedneſs; but make us fervent in ſpirit, ſerving the Lord.

And becauſe we cannot be ſafe without thy ſuccour, defend us, we beſeech thee, from all dangers both of ſoul and body.

Make us ever ſenſible that we depend upon thee; that in all our neceſſities we may look up to thee for help. And the gracious God give us what is needful for us, and an holy contentment in all conditions.

Give us the bleſſings of this life, with thy grace to direct us to the beſt uſe of them: but above all things, give us the bleſſings of the world to come, for Jeſus Chriſt his ſake.

Be gracious, O Lord, to thy whole church, eſpecially to that part of it in theſe kingdoms: be pleaſed to bleſs and preſerve the king and all the royal family. Grant that all magiſtrates may be faithful in their truſt, and zealous to promote thy glory: and that all miniſters of thy goſpel may be ſerious, diligent, and ſucceſsful in the works of their holy calling, being examples of all good works.

Let

Let the whole nation, and eſpecially this neighbourhood, grow in the true knowledge and fear of thee. Viſit with thy grace and bleſſing all our relations, friends and benefactors. Forgive and reconcile, both to thyſelf and to us, all our enemies. Comfort, relieve, and in thy own time deliver all thy afflicted ſervants: and ſanctify, both to them and to us, all thy dealings; cauſing all things in the end to work together for our good.

O Lord, pardon the infirmities of theſe prayers; and deal not with us according to our deſervings, but according to thy infinite mercies in thy beloved ſon: and grant us all thoſe bleſſings he hath comprehended in that excellent form of words, which he hath taught us, when we pray to ſay,

Our Father, &c.

An Evening Prayer for a Family, for any other Day in the Week.

O Lord, pardon all the ſins we have committed this day in thought, word or deed, againſt thy divine Majeſty, waſh us thoroughly from our wickedneſs, and cleanſe us from our ſins. And becauſe, through the weakneſs of our mortal nature, we cannot always ſtand upright, grant us the help of thy grace, that we may overcome all the temptations that daily ſurround us. Aſſiſt us, good Lord, by thy grace, that we may worſhip thee, ſerve thee, and obey thee as we ought to do. Supply us with all things needful, while we are on earth, and prepare our ſouls for the happineſs of heaven.

Lord receive us and all our friends into thy protection this night, watch over us, and refreſh us with ſeaſonable reſt, that we may riſe the next morning more fit for thy ſervice.

All praiſe and thankſgiving be to thee, O Lord, for the mercies beſtowed upon us this day, and all the days of our lives.

Mercifully hear our prayers, and accept our praiſes, for the ſake of our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. *Amen.*

O God, the father of heaven, the God of angels and men, the fountain of goodneſs, and the father of all compaſſion; have mercy upon us miſerable ſinners; hear our prayers, and accept us graciouſly through Jeſus Chriſt thy Son.

We confeſs, O Lord, with ſhame and ſorrow, that we have grievouſly ſinned againſt thee: we have neglected our duty to thee, our neighbour, and ourſelves; and tranſgreſſed thy will, in thought, word, and deed: yea, we have reaſon to fear, that we have this day added to the meaſure of our former ſins. O Lord, ſhouldeſt thou enter into judgment, what could we expect, but that fiery indignation that conſumes thine adverſaries, as the due rewards of our ſins? But, O Lord, there is mercy with thee, that thou mayeſt be ſerved in hope. O, fit us for that mercy, by giving us a deep and hearty repentance; and then, according to thy goodneſs, let thine anger be turned away from us. Look favourably upon us, for the ſake of thy bleſſed Son our Saviour; and for the merit of his ſufferings, pardon all our ſins: and by the power of thy grace, ſo renew and purify our hearts, that

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we may become new creatures; ſincerely forſaking every evil way, and living in conſtant and univerſal obedience to thee all the reſt of our days.

Let thy holy Spirit, by whom we are called to this ſtate of ſalvation, be the guide of our lives, and lead us in the way that we ſhould go; that we may, through his aid, mortify our corrupt affections, and daily increaſe in all virtue and godlineſs. And give us grace never to conſent to any known wickedneſs, nor ever to grieve thy holy Spirit, by which we are ſanctified.

Make us to ſee the evil of ſin, that we may flee from it, and ſtrive againſt the greateſt evil that can befal us. And may the ſenſe of our infirmities and backſlidings make us diligent and careful to avoid all temptations to ſin, to look up to thee for help, and to uſe all the means of grace which thy goodneſs ſhall afford us; that we may receive the fulneſs of thy grace, and remain in the number of thy faithful ſervants all the days of our lives.

Enlighten our ſouls with ſaving truth. Correct us in mercy, when we grow careleſs of our ſalvation. Make us ever mindful of our latter end. From ſudden, and from eternal death, good Lord deliver us.

We beſeech thee, O God, that thy grace may ever be with us, to keep us from all thoughts, words, and actions, that we ſhould have cauſe to repent of. Let thy grace, which is ſufficient, ſecure us from the temptations of the world, the fleſh, and the devil; that we may not follow, nor be led by them.

Lord, make us ſenſible that we wholly depend upon thee, for life and health, proſperity and comfort. Let it be our delight, as well as our duty, to ſerve thee faithfully. Continue to us thy bleſſings, we beſeech thee; and give us grace never to abuſe them.

Defend us in all dangers, comfort us in all afflictions, direct us when we know not what to do; and bring us, in thy good time, to thy heavenly kingdom, for Jeſus Chriſt his ſake.

We confeſs, O gracious Lord, that we are not worthy of the leaſt of all the mercies which thou haſt ſhewed thy ſervants; who wholly depend upon thee: and therefore we moſt humbly thank thee for all thy favours; thy continual care over us, thy patience towards us, thy fatherly corrections, thy merciful deliverances: particularly, we thank and adore thy great goodneſs, for the preſervations and bleſſings of the day paſt: but above all, for the unſpeakable benefits of the death of Chriſt; that we are Chriſtians, and in the way of ſalvation.

O Lord, preſerve in our ſouls a lively ſenſe and remembrance of all thy bleſſings; that we may be affected with thy goodneſs, may ſtill partake of thy kindneſs, and may continue in thy favour, and under the direction of thy good ſpirit unto our life's end.

In confidence that thou heareſt us, art every where, and never ſlumbereſt nor ſleepeſt; we commit ourſelves to the care of thy watchful providence this night; moſt humbly requeſting thy protection and preſervation therein. May it pleaſe thy goodneſs, to give this whole family com-

comfortable reſt and repoſe: O Lord, defend our habitation, and all about us, from fire, and all calamitous accidents; deliver us from the power of evil ſpirits, and of evil men; and raiſe us up in health and ſafety, that we may chearfully praiſe and glorify thee both in ſoul and body, and ſerve thee faithfully to our life's end.

Shew mercy, O Lord, to the whole world. Let the goſpel of thy ſon ſpread throughout all the earth. Particularly, we beſeech thee, to be gracious to this church and nation: grant that we may be ſo humbled and reformed, as that we may be pardoned and ſpared.

Pour down thy bleſſings upon the king, and all the royal family: give them grace to exceed others as much in goodneſs as in greatneſs, and make them ſignal inſtruments of thy glory, and of the publick good.

Bleſs all our governors both in church and ſtate: ſo rule their hearts, and ſtrengthen their hands, that they may neither want will nor power to puniſh wickedneſs and vice, and to maintain thy true religion and virtue.

Viſit with thy grace and mercy all thy afflicted ſervants; relieve all their particular neceſſities of body and mind; give them patience and ſubmiſſion to thy bleſſed will; and in thy due time deliver them from all their troubles. And let this be the happy effect of all thy diſpenſations, both to them and us, even to bring us nearer to thyſelf.

Bleſs all our friends and relations; and all that have done good to us, or others for thy ſake. Be pleaſed to aſſiſt them by thy grace; comfort them in their troubles; protect them in all dangers;

and grant them whatſoever thou ſeeſt neceſſary, either to their ſouls or bodies.

Have mercy, Lord, on all that ſue for mercy; ſupply the needs of all that want; and grant us all ſuch meaſures of thy grace, as may enable us to perſevere in well-doing; that growing up to ſuch degrees of holineſs as this mortal ſtate is capable of, we may at laſt attain the perfection of it in thy kingdom.

O Lord, pardon the wanderings and coldneſs of theſe our prayers; and deal not with us according to our deſerts; but according to the freedom and fulneſs of thy mercies in Jeſus Chriſt; in whoſe bleſſed name and words we recommend ourſelves, and all that belong to us, to thine abundant mercy.

Our Father, &c.

Lighten our darkneſs, we beſeech thee, O Lord, and by thy great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night, for the love of thine only ſon, our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. *Amen.*

Almighty God, who haſt given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common ſupplications unto thee, and doſt promiſe, that when two or three are gathered together in thy name, thou wilt grant their requeſts; fulfil now, O Lord, the deſires and petitions of thy ſervants, as may be moſt expedient for them; granting us in this world knowledge of thy truth, and in the world to come life everlaſting. *Amen.*

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The grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and the love of God, and the fellowſhip of the Holy Ghoſt be with us all evermore. *Amen.*

Another Morning Prayer for a Family.

ALmighty and everlaſting God, in whom we live and move, and have our being, and whoſe mercy is over all thy works; we thy needy creatures, in a thankful ſenſe of thy good providence over us, do render thee our humbleſt praiſes for thy preſervation of us from the beginning of our lives to this time. Bleſſed be thy holy name for the continual protection of thy hand, by which we have been defended amidſt the changes and miſeries of this mortal life, and delivered from innumerable dangers, and particularly from any evil accident of the night paſt. To thy watchful providence we wholly owe it * that no diſturbance hath come nigh us, or our dwelling; but that we have enjoyed quiet and refreſhing ſleep, and are brought in ſafety to the beginning of this day. For theſe and all other thy mercies, our ſouls do bleſs and magnify thy glorious name, humbly beſeeching thee to accept this our morning-ſacrifice of praiſe and thankſgiving, for the ſake of Jeſus Chriſt our Saviour.

* *When diſturbances of any kind befal a family, inſtead of this, ſay,* [That notwithſtanding our fears and dangers, we are brought in ſafety to the beginning of this day.]

And ſince it is of thy mercy, O gracious Father, that another day is adding to our lives; let us dedicate both our ſouls and bodies to thee and thy ſervice, to promote thy glory and our

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own ſalvation, in a ſober, righteous, and godly life.

But, Lord, thou knoweſt the weakneſs and corruption of our nature, and the manifold temptations that we daily meet with; we therefore humbly beſeech thee to have compaſſion upon our infirmities, and to give us the conſtant aſſiſtance of thy grace and holy ſpirit, that we may be effectually reſtrained from ſin, and excited to our duty. Suffer us not to be tempted above what we are able; and when thou ſeeſt us giving way to any temptation, ſtretch forth thy helping hand to ſave and deliver us. Imprint in our hearts ſuch a dread of thy judgments, and ſuch a love of thy goodneſs towards us, as may make us both afraid, and aſhamed to offend thee: and above all, keep in our minds a lively remembrance of that great day in which we muſt give a ſtrict account of our thoughts, words, and actions, and according to the works done in the body, and be either eternally rewarded or puniſhed by him whom thou haſt appointed judge of the quick and dead, Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.

Wherefore, we beſeech thee give us grace to have thee and thy law always before our eyes, that we may walk therein according to thy will, with watchfulneſs and circumſpection. Keep us ſober and temperate, and diligent in the ſeveral ſtates and conditions which thy providence hath appointed for us. Grant us patience under any affliction thou ſhall ſee fit to lay upon us, and minds always contented with our preſent condition. Give us grace to be juſt and upright in all our dealings, quiet and peaceable, full of com-

compaſſion towards the needy and afflicted, and ever ready to do good to all men, according to the abilities and opportunities which thou ſhalt give us; that ſo walking faithfully before thee all our days, and being found watching whenever our appointed time ſhall come, we may from a life of righteouſneſs, be tranſlated to life and bliſs eternal.

And we humbly beg thy bleſſing this day upon our honeſt deſigns and undertakings. Direct us in all our ways, and proſper the work of our hands. Let thy good providence watch over us, and preſerve us in our going out and coming in. Defend us from all dangers and adverſities, and be thou graciouſly pleaſed to take us, and all things belonging to us, into thy fatherly care and protection. Theſe things, O Lord, and whatever elſe thou ſeeſt needful and convenient both for our ſouls and bodies, we humbly beg of thee, for the ſake of thy Son Jeſus Chriſt; in whoſe moſt holy name and words we pray unto thee for ourſelves and all mankind.

Our Father, &c.

Another Evening Prayer for a Family.

MOST gracious and merciful God, who art of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and haſt promiſed mercy and forgiveneſs to all them who confeſs and forſake their ſins; we come before thee in an humble ſenſe of our own unworthineſs, acknowledging our manifold tranſgreſſions of thy righteous laws, in thought, word, and deed; we have done thoſe things which thou haſt forbidden, and left undone the things which thou

thou haſt commanded; ſo that when we look back upon our paſt lives, and remember that thou art privy to our moſt ſecret ſins, we are afraid of thy judgments, and aſhamed to lift up our eyes unto thee. But, O gracious Father, who deſireſt not the death of a ſinner, look upon us, we beſeech thee, in thy Son Jeſus Chriſt; for the merits of his ſufferings, be thou merciful to us, in the pardon of our ſins; make us deeply ſenſible of the great evil and danger of them, and work in us a hearty contrition: and grant that the remembrance of them may be more grievous and afflicting to us, than of any other evil whatſoever; that we worthily lamenting our tranſgreſſions, and being brought to a hearty repentance and amendment of life, may obtain forgiveneſs at thy hands, who art ever ready to receive humble and penitent ſinners, for the ſake of thy Son Jeſus Chriſt, our only ſaviour and redeemer.

And leſt, through our frailty, or the temptations that encompaſs us, we be drawn again to our former ſins, vouchſafe us, we beſeech thee, the direction and aſſiſtance of thy holy ſpirit, that as thou haſt put into our hands good deſires, ſo by the help of thy grace, we may bring the ſame to good effect. Reform whatever thou ſeeſt amiſs in the temper and diſpoſition of our ſouls; that no unlawful deſigns, or inordinate deſires, may reſt there. Purge our hearts from envy, hatred, and malice, that we may never let the ſun go down upon our wrath, but may always go to reſt in peace, charity, and good-will, with a conſcience void of offence towards

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thee, and towards all men; that ſo our hearts being a fit habitation for thy holy Spirit, he may continually dwell therein; and whether we wake or ſleep, we may be under his bleſſed influence, and have our whole ſpirit, ſoul and body, preſerved pure and blameleſs, unto the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.

Accept, O Lord, as the teſtimony of our love and charity, our hearty interceſſions for all mankind. Let the light of thy goſpel ſhine upon all nations, and grant that all who have already heard and received it, may live ſuitably to it. Be more eſpecially gracious to this church and nation whereunto we belong. Bleſs our moſt gracious ſovereign lord the King, the royal iſſue, and the reſt of the royal family; and all who by thy providence have authority under him, both in church and ſtate; and ſo guide and direct them, that all their deſigns and undertakings may tend to the advancement of thy glory, and the good and welfare of this church and nation. Send down thy bleſſings, ſpiritual and temporal, upon all our relations, friends, and neighbours; reward all that have done us good, and pardon all who have done, or wiſhed us evil, and give them repentance and better minds. Be merciful to all who are in any trouble or affliction, either in mind, body, or eſtate; and do thou, who art the God of pity and compaſſion, adminiſter to every one help and comfort, according to their ſeveral neceſſities, for his ſake, who went about doing good to the ſouls and bodies of men, thy Son our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.

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We likewiſe add our unfeigned thanks for all the mercies which from time to time thou haſt vouchſafed us. We bleſs thee for our being, our reaſon, and all other endowments and faculties of ſoul and body; for our health, friends, food, and raiment, and all the other comforts and conveniencies of life. But above all, we adore thy tender mercy in ſending thy only Son into the world, to redeem us from ſin and eternal death, and for giving us knowledge and ſenſe of our duty towards thee. We bleſs thee for thy patience with us, notwithſtanding our many and great provocations; for all the directions, aſſiſtances, and comforts of thy holy Spirit; for thy continual care, and watchful providence over us through the whole courſe of our lives; and particularly for the mercies and benefits of the day paſt; humbly beſeeching thee to continue theſe thy bleſſings to us, and to give us grace to ſhew our ſenſe of them, and all thy other mercies, in a ſincere obedience to thy laws.

And particularly, O Lord, we beſeech thee to continue thy gracious protection to us this night. Into thy hands we commend ourſelves, our ſouls and bodies, our ſubſtance, dwellings, and all things that belong to us: do thou, O gracious God, who neither ſlumbereſt nor ſleepeſt, be pleaſed to take us, and all belonging to us, this night into thy eſpecial care and protection. Defend us from all danger and miſchief, and from dread and fear of any; and grant that we may enjoy ſuch quiet and refreſhing ſleep, as may fit us for the duties of the day following. And, O Lord, make us ever mindful of that time, when we

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ſhall lie down in the duſt; and grant us grace always to live in ſuch a ſtate; that we may never be afraid or unfit to die; but that whether we live, we may live unto thee; or whether we die, we may die unto thee; that ſo living and dying we may be thine; through the merits and ſatisfaction of thy Son Jeſus Chriſt; in whoſe prevailing name and comprehenſive words we continue to pray as he hath taught us.

Our Father, &c.

PRAYERS for Perſons in private; for every Day in the Week.

A Preparatory Prayer.

BLeſſed Lord, who haſt commanded, and invited us to pray unto thee; O, let thy Spirit help my infirmities; and do thou ſo diſpoſe my mind, and prepare my heart, that my prayers and praiſes may be acceptable in thy ſight, through the mediation, and for the ſake of Jeſus Chriſt. *Amen.*

A Prayer for Sunday Morning.

O God, who art the giver of all good gifts, and the father of mercies, I thy unworthy ſervant adore thy glorious majeſty for thoſe marvellous inſtances of thy love, which thou haſt in all ages ſhewn to the ſons of men: in all thy dealings and diſpenſations towards us, thou haſt manifeſted thyſelf to be a moſt kind and compaſſionate father; thou haſt provided for the com-

comfort and ſupport of our bodies, and ſhewn a moſt tender care and concern for the welfare and happineſs of our immortal ſouls: in great mercy to them, thou didſt appoint one day in ſeven for thy more peculiar worſhip and ſervice, that ſo by a frequent and religious obſervance of the chriſtian ſabbath here on earth, we might be better fitted and prepared to celebrate that eternal ſabbath of everlaſting reſt, which thou haſt reſerved for us hereafter.

For this, O Lord, and all the other teſtimonies of thy love, which thou haſt ſhewn to me, and all mankind, I deſire with an humble and thankful heart to bleſs and praiſe thy holy name; and more eſpecially for that inexpreſſible inſtance of thy love, the ſending thy ſon Chriſt Jeſus into the world, to be the propitiation for our ſins.

I bleſs thee, O Lord, for thy great goodneſs in preſerving me this night paſt from all perils and dangers, and bringing me in health and ſafety to the beginning of this holy day.

O my God, give me grace to make a right uſe and improvement of this, and all other opportunities thou art pleaſed to put into my hands; pardon, I moſt humbly beſeech thee, my unprofitableneſs under the means of grace; and, O merciful Father, let not my ſins provoke thee ſo far, as to deprive me of the helps and advantages of thy divine inſtitution; but grant, O Lord, that I may ſpend this and all other times ſet apart for thy more immediate ſervice, in ſuch a holy and religious manner, as may promote thy honour and glory, and ſet forward the ſalva-

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tion of my ſoul: and that I may be enabled ſo to do, O let thy grace and holy ſpirit be always preſent with me; for of myſelf I am not able to pleaſe thee.

Give me awful thoughts of thy divine majeſty, and ſuch an humble, ſerious, and devout frame of mind, that when I attend upon the publick ſervice of thy church, no vain or tumultuous thoughts may diſtract my devotion, nor any dulneſs or wearineſs ſeize upon my ſpirits; but from a true ſenſe of my unworthineſs, and of my entire dependance upon thee for the ſupply of all my wants, I may pray unto thee and praiſe thee with moſt devout and hearty affections, and may offer unto thee a lively ſacrifice, holy and acceptable in thy ſight.

Suffer me not, O merciful Father, to reſt in a meer outward form of godlineſs; but grant, that I may endeavour more and more to have my heart animated and enlivened with the ſpirit and power of religion, and to become a true diſciple of the bleſſed Jeſus; by imitating his example; obſerving his precepts; and making it the conſtant and principal care and concern of my life; to promote thy honour, and my own and others ſalvation.

Let thy good ſpirit, O Lord, be powerfully aſſiſting to the labours and endeavours of thoſe, to whom thou haſt committed the care of ſouls, particularly of him, under whoſe miniſtry thy providence has placed me.

Give thy bleſſing to thy holy word preached, and remove from me, and all that attend thy holy ordinances, all prejudices and indiſpoſitions

of

of mind, that nothing may hinder its due and ſaving efficacy upon our ſouls. Give us that humble and teachable ſpirit, which becomes them that would learn of thee; and O let every good inſtruction that ſhall this day be given us, ſink deep into our hearts, and bring forth in us the fruits of a holy and religious life, that we may not be hearers of thy word only, but doers alſo, leaſt we deceive our own ſouls.

Be with me, O Lord, this day in all places, and upon all occaſions: direct and guide me, ſanctify and preſerve me. Keep me both outwardly in my body, and inwardly in my ſoul. Defend me from the power and malice of the devil, from the corruptions of my own ſinful nature, and from thoſe ſins eſpecially that do moſt eaſily beſet and enſnare me. Free my mind from the diſturbances of paſſion and anger, and all perplexing thoughts and cares; and ſo ſtrengthen it by thy grace and holy ſpirit, that nothing may hinder or diſcompoſe me in my duty, or render me unfit for thy ſervice. Let me no ways profane this thy holy day, either in thought, word, or deed; but give me grace to ſpend it in ſuch a holy and religious manner, that every day of my life may be the better for it; and when I come to the concluſion of this day, I may look with joy and comfort, in an humble hope of thy divine acceptance, through the merits and mediation of my dear redeemer, Jeſus Chriſt the righteous. *Amen.*

Our Father, &c.

A Maſter or Miſtreſs of a Family may very properly add this ſhort Prayer.

MAKE me duly mindful, O Lord, of all thoſe that are under my care; and grant that none of my family may, thro' any neglect of mine, be ever wanting in their duty towards thee. Let the care of my own ſoul be extended likewiſe to a concern for theirs; and give me ſuch a zeal for thy glory, ſuch a true regard for the ſalvation of others, that I may endeavour (as much as in me lies) to promote religion and piety in all about me. Convince me truly, O Lord, how much it is my duty, as well as intereſt, that I and my houſe ſhould ſerve thee: that we ſhould daily offer up our united prayers and praiſes at the throne of grace, and eſpecially upon this day, ſet apart more peculiarly for thy ſervice. Be in the midſt of us, O Lord, when we aſſemble ourſelves together; ſend thy bleſſing upon all our religious duties; and grant that not only the form, but the power of true religion, may be viſible among us; to our great comfort in this world, and our eternal happineſs in that which is to come. Grant this, O merciful Father, for Jeſus Chriſt's ſake, our only mediator and advocate. *Amen.*

ACTS *of* FAITH, HOPE, *and* CHARITY, *proper to be made on* Sunday.

Of FAITH.

O My God, I believe with a moſt firm faith all thoſe things which thou haſt revealed, and which thy holy church propoſes to my belief. I believe in one true and living God, my firſt beginning and laſt end; and that in this one God there are three diſtinct perſons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt. I believe in Jeſus Chriſt the Son of God, true God and true Man, who was born of the Virgin Mary, and died upon the croſs to deliver us from ſin and hell. I bow down my underſtanding and my will to adore theſe and all other thy ſacred truths, how incomprehenſible ſoever to my weakneſs. I embrace them all, and adhere to them with all my ſoul, becauſe they have been revealed by thee, the ſovereign truth, who neither canſt deceive, nor be deceived. I believe in all things according as the holy catholick church believes. In this faith I now live; in the ſame, by thy grace, I reſolve to die. Be thou pleaſed daily to increaſe and ſtrengthen this my faith.

Of HOPE.

O My God, nothing is hard or impoſſible to thee, becauſe thy power is infinite; and there is nothing that thou art not willing to do in favour of us poor mortals, becauſe thy mercy and goodneſs for us is infinite. Thou haſt made us

us to thine own image and likeneſs, and thou loveſt the work of thy hands; thou haſt redeemed us by the precious blood of thy only ſon; and for his ſake thou art ever opening thy hand to pour out thy graces upon us; never forſaking us, if we forſake not thee; and ſtill calling upon unhappy ſinners that have forſaken thee; to return to thee. Thou haſt promiſed mercy to ſuch as ſincerely ſeek it, grace to ſuch as heartily pray for it, and eternal ſalvation through Jeſus Chriſt, to ſuch as perſevere to the end in thy fear and love. Upon theſe ſtrong grounds I build all my hopes; and relying upon the aſſiſtance of thy grace, and the merits of my Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, I truſt to find mercy in the forgiveneſs of my ſins, and ſo paſs the remainder of this mortal life in thy divine ſervice, that I may come hereafter to enjoy thee in a happy eternity. In thee, O Lord, is my hope, O let me never be confounded.

Of CHARITY.

O My God, thou commandeſt me to love thee with my whole heart, with my whole ſoul, with all my mind, and with all my ſtrength; and it is my ſincere deſire ſo to love thee. O come and take poſſeſſion of my whole heart and ſoul, and teach me this heavenly art of love. Let this ſacred fire ever burn upon the altar of my heart: let nothing be able to extinguiſh it. O, let nothing in life or death ever ſeparate me from thy love.

Thou art the ſupreme good; the fountain of all good; and thou art infinitely good to me. Thou

Thou art the ſovereign beauty, and the ſovereign truth, the immenſe and incomprehenſible ocean of all perfection. Thou art my creator, my redeemer, the beſt of friends, and my perpetual benefactor. Thou art my ſweet repoſe, my true and only joy, and eternal felicity. Thou art my conſtant lover, the father and ſpouſe of my ſoul. Thou art my God and my all. O! when ſhall I be ſo happy as to ſee thee, to love thee, to enjoy thee for ever.

I deſire with all my whole heart, that the whole univerſe may glorify thee; that thou mayeſt be known, worthily praiſed and ſerved by all nations; that thy love may ſubdue all hearts; and that all thy creatures may fulfil thy will in all things. O when will ſin have an end? When will thy kingdom perfectly come? When wilt thou reign all in all? In the mean time I offer thee my whole ſelf without reſerve, and I deſire to be for ever a ſervant of thy love; and to invite as many as I can to love thee, whom I deſire to love in thee, and for thee. I rejoice with my whole ſoul, that thou art in thyſelf eternally and infinitely happy; and that nothing can be added to thy greatneſs and glory. O grant, that we may all be eternal witneſſes of this glory, and eternally rejoice therein, through Jeſus Chriſt thy Son. *Amen.*

Prayers that may be uſed, in the Church,

O Thou infinitely powerful and gracious God, remember, I beſeech thee, the frailty of me thy poor creature, and vouchſafe me the aſſiſtance of thy holy Spirit in thoſe duties, I am

now

now about to perform. Let thy holy Spirit purify my heart from all vain and wandering thoughts, and confine it to thyſelf, and thy ſervice; that I may ſhew a due regard to all the parts of thy worſhip; and may now, and always, attend upon thee with that profound humility, becoming reverence, and affective devotion, that becomes a poor miſerable ſinner, before the great creator and judge of the whole world.

Before the Leſſons, or the Sermon.

BLeſſed art thou, O Lord; O teach me thy ſtatutes. Lord, open my eyes that I may ſee the wonderous things of thy law.

Lord, help me ſo to hear and underſtand, remember and practiſe thy heavenly word, that it may make me wiſe to ſalvation.

Lord, bleſs thy ſervant that is to ſpeak, and bleſs all us that are to hear; and grant that we may now, and ever, profit by thy holy word.

O Lord, I beſeech thee, add ſuch inward grace to thoſe outward means, as may make us willing to be taught and reproved: that thy word may not be to any of us, as ſeed falling on a rock; but may bring forth fruit to life eternal, through Jeſus Chriſt. *Amen.*

After Service.

O Lord, I beſeech thee, accept our poor ſervices; and compaſſionate our infirmities. Oh! pardon our wanderings, dulneſs, and indevotion; ſupply all our wants, and the wants of all thy ſervants; and grant all that we have prayed for, and whatever elſe thou ſeeſt neceſſary

or profitable for us, for Jeſus Chriſt his ſake. *Amen.* Lord: ſo be it.

Glory be to thee, O Lord, moſt high.

When we are returned Home.

GLORY be to thee, O Lord, who haſt permitted me to appear before thee this day; and to tread thy courts.

Lord, pardon all my failings in thy ſervice; the wanderings, dulneſs, and indevotion of my prayers: for the ſake of my bleſſed Saviour, have mercy upon me, pardon and accept me.

Lord, make me a doer of thy word, and not a hearer only; leſt I deceive my own ſoul, let it be the power of God unto ſalvation.

O Lord hear, O Lord forgive; O Lord hearken, and do: defer not for thine own ſake, O my God.

Short Heads of Examination for every Evening.

THAT your whole life may be more conformable to the goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt, by which we muſt be judged; and that you may have leſs to do, when you ſet a time apart for more ſolemn examination, it has been adviſed by wiſe and good men, that we ſhould every evening put ſome ſuch queſtions as theſe to ourſelves, which are chiefly tranſcribed out of that excellent book, entitled, A Companion for the Feſtivals and Faſts of the Church.

How have I ſpent the day paſt? What ſin have I committed?

Have I performed my morning devotion? And how?

Have I reſigned myſelf to the all-wiſe government and diſpoſal of God, to be ordered and ruled by him, and to do or ſuffer his will?

Have

Have I converſed with candor, affability and ſincerity?

Have I kept at a diſtance from detraction, ſlander, and evil ſpeaking?

Have I had ſufficient care in my commendation of others, ſo as to give no encouragement to any evil practice?

How have I employed or improved my time?

With what honeſty and fidelity have I diſcharged the affairs in which I have been engaged?

If I have diverted myſelf, have I done it innocently, and in ſuch manner and meaſure as is ſuitable to my chriſtian profeſſion?

Have I been guilty of any exceſs in eating, or drinking, or ſleep?

What mercies have I received? How thankful have I been, and am I for them? What temptations have I reſiſted?

What ground have I got of the ſin that doth moſt eaſily beſet me?

How have I governed my paſſions? Have I not been too eaſily provoked by little accidents which daily happen?

What opportunities have I had of doing good? And how have I improved them?

What opportunities have I had of diſcouraging evil, and how have I oppoſed it?

To theſe queſtions, you may add ſuch others as you find uſeful. If you recollect the whole time of the day from your riſing (for which a few minutes before your evening devotions will ſuffice) you will very eaſily be enabled to anſwer the preceding queſtions; and when you have done this, you muſt heartily beg God's pardon for any ſins you have been guilty of, and ſhew yourſelf thankful for thoſe bleſſings, reſpecting either this or another life, which he hath beſtowed on you.

Some have written down the ſins they have been guilty of, that they might again humble themſelves at the time of their more ſolemn humiliation; which may

be farther uſeful; for by comparing one time with another, you will better diſcern the amendment of your life, and growth in chriſtian virtue; but of the uſefulneſs and expediency of this method, every perſon is left to judge for himſelf.

A Prayer for Sunday *Evening.*

O Moſt great, moſt glorious, and eternal God? Thou art the ſovereign Lord of heaven and earth; in whom we live, and move, and have our being, and from whom are derived all the comforts and conveniencies of this life, and all our hopes and expectations of a better.

With what awfulneſs and humility, with what fear and reverence, ought I to appear before thee, when I conſider the greatneſs of thy majeſty, and the purity of thy divine nature; that thou haſt no pleaſure in wickedneſs, but hateſt all the workers of iniquity, and that ſuch as be fooliſh ſhall not ſtand in thy ſight? O Lord! I acknowledge that I am not worthy to come into thy preſence, nor to lift up my eyes towards the throne of thy mercy-ſeat. My ſins and tranſgreſſions are many, and divers of them have been often repeated: the corruption of my heart, and the ſinfulneſs of my thoughts, are perfectly known to thee; and the puniſhment due unto my ſins, is greater than I am able to bear.

I confeſs, O Lord, that I have not loved thee with that ſincerity, nor ſerved thee with that faithfulneſs that I ought to have done. The intereſts of this life have been ſo much my care

and

and concern, as to make me negligent and remiſs in the great and important work of my ſalvation.

How many duties have I omitted, or performed with coldneſs and indevotion; How often have I been a hearer of thy word only, and not a doer? How often, both in publick and private, have I prayed, when my heart has been far from thee. This very day, O Lord, thou haſt given me an opportunity of ſerving thee in thy houſe; but, alas! my ſervices there have been accompanied with ſo many failings, ſo many imperfections, that I have juſt cauſe to humble myſelf before thee.

O Lord! if thou ſhouldſt deal with me as I have deſerved, how juſtly mayſt thou deprive me of all thoſe means of grace, and opportunities of working out my ſalvation, which thou haſt hitherto vouchſafed me? But, O merciful father! thou declareſt thyſelf to be a God merciful and gracious, forgiving iniquity, tranſgreſſion, and ſin. My only hope, therefore, is in thy tender mercies, which have been ever of old; and in that pity and compaſſion, which thou haſt ſhewn to mankind, in the redemption of the world, by the death of thy dear ſon. For thy name's ſake then, O Lord, and for thy beloved ſon's ſake, pardon, I moſt humbly beſeech thee, all my paſt ſins, and let not iniquity be my ruin. Forgive the deadneſs of my devotion; the coldneſs of my affections; the wanderings of my prayers; and whatever thou haſt ſeen amiſs in me. O pity my infirmities, and lay not to my charge the imperfections of my religious duties.

Enable me, O Lord, by the aſſiſtance of thy good Spirit, to amend whatever has been amiſs, and to endeavour more and more after the attainment of all thoſe graces and good diſpoſitions which are neceſſary to render our prayers and praiſes acceptable in thy ſight.

O let me never fall into a careleſs and unconcerned ſtate of mind; into a coldneſs and indifferency towards the duties of religion; but animate and enliven my ſluggiſh heart, and cleanſe it from all its defilements: O! repleniſh my ſoul with the graces of thy holy Spirit; that I may become vigorous and active in thy ſervice, and fruitful in every good work.

Give me, O Lord, ſuch a lively ſenſe and conviction of the ſhortneſs and uncertainty of this life, and of the momentous concerns of eternity; that I may not be ſo fooliſh, as to waſte my precious time in an eager purſuit after the things of this world; but grant that I may employ it in ſuch a manner as may beſt promote thy honour and glory, and ſet forward mine own ſalvation. O make me ſo wiſe, as to ſee, and know, and follow the things, that make for my peace, leſt they be hid from mine eyes, and all opportunities of reconciling myſelf to thee my offended God be far from me.

Let the ſalvation of my precious ſoul be my conſtant care and concern; grant that I may never forget the one thing needful; but give all diligence to make my calling and election ſure; that endeavouring in all things to approve myſelf thy faithful ſervant, I may from ſerving thee here upon earth, be admitted, in thy good appointed

pointed time, to the praiſing thee eternally in thy everlaſting kingdom, through the merits of my compaſſionate ſaviour and redeemer, Jeſus Chriſt. *Amen.*

The Interceſſion.

O GOD, who art loving unto every man, and whoſe mercy is over all thy works; I beſeech thee to extend thy pity and compaſſion to the whole race of mankind; let the bright beams of thy goſpel ſhine into all the corners of the earth; that thoſe that ſit in darkneſs may come to the knowledge and practice of thy laws, and their ſouls be ſaved in the great day of the Lord Jeſus.

More particularly, O Lord, be merciful to theſe nations to which I belong: pardon our great and crying ſins, and avert from us the evils which we have moſt juſtly deſerved: put a ſtop to all profaneneſs, irreligion, and impiety; to all our unhappy ſtrifes and animoſities; and let truth and righteouſneſs, brotherly love and charity, flouriſh and increaſe among us.

Be gracious to thy holy Catholick Church; and eſpecially to that part of it, which thou haſt planted in theſe kingdoms: heal the breaches and diviſions of it; and grant that it may flouriſh and abound in true piety and virtue, peace and charity.

Bleſs eſpecially our ſovereign Lord the King, protect his perſon, direct his councils, proſper his government, and make him an inſtrument, in thy hands, of great good to theſe kingdoms.

Inſpire the paſtors and governors of thy church, with a ſpirit of true religion and goodneſs; and make them zealous and diligent to promote it, in all thoſe who are under their charge.

Bleſs the magiſtrates, the nobility, gentry, and commons of theſe realms; grant that they may all ſtudy to ſerve thee, and to diſcharge the duties of their ſeveral ſtations, always remembring the great account which they muſt one day give.

Be merciful, O God, to all that are in any affliction or diſtreſs; that labour under poverty or perſecution; under bodily pains or diſeaſes, or under temptation or trouble of mind; be pleaſed, O Lord, to ſupport and comfort them, and in thy good time to deliver them, according to thy great mercy.

Send down the graces of thy holy Spirit upon all my friends and relations; [particularly father and mother, my brothers and ſiſters; my dear wife and children] pardon all our ſins; unite our hearts in a mutual love of each other; and vouchſafe to every one of us, (and all others that either pray for me, or deſire my prayers) whatever thy infinite wiſdom knows to be moſt needful and expedient both for our ſouls and bodies. Reward all thoſe who have been any ways inſtrumental to my good; and forgive thoſe that have done or wiſhed me evil, and grant them repentance and better minds.

Let this be varied as every one ſtands related.

And now, O merciful Father, I offer up to thy divine majeſty my unfeigned praiſes, in return for all thoſe numberleſs mercies.

The thankſgiving.

cies and benefits which thou haſt vouchſafed me; more particularly I bleſs thy holy name for the mercies of the day paſt; for whatever ſin I have eſcaped, and whatever good I have done; for preſerving me in health and ſafety; for providing ſo plentifully for me; for continuing to me the enjoyments of ſo many comforts; and for delivering me from the evils which I have moſt juſtly deſerved, and to which I am continually expoſed. But above all, I bleſs and magnify thy holy name for the foundation of theſe and all thy other mercies, thy Son Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.

A prayer for God's protection the enſuing night.

O Lord, give me grace to make a right uſe and improvement of all thy mercies. Vouchſafe me the continuance of thy favour and protection; take me this night under the care of thy good providence; preſerve me from all evil, but eſpecially from that of ſin; keep me from fire and thieves, and from every adverſity of ſoul and body; and after the comfortable refreſhments of reſt and ſleep, raiſe me up, I humbly pray thee, in health and ſafety, with a heart full of love to thee, and zeal to thy ſervice, through Jeſus Chriſt our bleſſed Saviour and redeemer; in whoſe prevailing name, and in the fulleſt ſenſe of whoſe words, I pray to be heard.

Our Father, &c.

A Prayer for Monday *Morning.*

GLory be to thee, O great Jehovah; who to conſtrain us to love and obey thee, art pleaſed to honour every faithful ſoul with a near

and intimate relation to thyſelf, and graciouſly to declare, I am the Lord thy God.

O gracious Lord, what is it poſſible for me to deſire more, than to have thee for my God.

If thou be my God, the relation ought to be mutual, and I muſt be thy ſervant: O be thou my God, and let me be thy ſervant for ever.

Glorious Jehovah! if thou be my God, and if I truly love thee; I can never ſuffer any creature to be thy rival, or to ſhare my heart with thee; I can have no other God, no other love, but thee.

O infinite goodneſs, thou art altogether amiable; whatever is amiable beſides thee, is no farther ſo than as it bears ſome impreſſions on it of thy amiableneſs: and therefore all love, all glory be to thee alone.

O thou, who only art worthy to be loved, inſtil into my ſoul ſo entire, reverential a love of thee, that I may love nothing but for thy ſake, or in ſubordination to thy love: let thy love ſo entirely poſſeſs my ſoul that there may be no room for any thing elſe.

My God, what can a ſoul enamoured of thee, ever deſire but thee? O let not the world, nor any thing in it, have any place in my heart; but withdraw all my affections from thence, and fix them on thee.

O my God, thou art the great ſearcher of hearts, and doſt not only require outward acts of duty, but the inward diſpoſition of the heart: the heart is the chief ſacrifice thou requireſt; the heart is the proper ſeat of thy love: and therefore I wholly devote my heart unto thee.

O my God, create in me a clean heart; that the

the fountain of action being clean, the ſtreams may run clean alſo.

Give me a heart, O thou that only canſt make the change, entirely turned to thee; that I thirſting after thee, as the wearied hart after the cool ſtreams, may forſake all the vain complacencies of the world; refuſe all ſocieties that are lewd, impious, and uncharitable. Mortify in me all inordinate love of ſenſual pleaſure; and grant that I may deſire nothing but thee: let me have no paſſions, but what may become thy ſervant, and a diſciple of the Holy Jeſus.

My God, let thy heavenly love be the conſtant biaſs of my ſoul. O may it be the natural ſpring and weight of my heart; and always move towards thee.

Turn thou me, O Lord, and ſo ſhall I be turned. Turn, O Lord, the whole ſtream of my affections from ſenſual loves, to the love of thee.

O take from me all affection to ſin and vanity: let not my affections dwell below, but ſoar upwards to the element of love: grant that I may love thee, and whatever thou hateſt; and know no love but the love of God, and the moſt merciful Jeſus.

O my God, to love and to glorify thy name, is the great end of my creation; which is ſtill more enforced by my redemption: let it therefore be the greateſt buſineſs of my whole life to love, and to glorify thee all the poſſible ways I can; by my mouth, by my converſation, by my publick confeſſion of thee before men, even to death, if ever thou art pleaſed to call me to it,

and

and by engaging all I can to glorify and love thee. O happy life! O bleſſed death! which is ſpent, and expires in glorifying and loving thee.

O my God, fix in my ſoul an habitual pure intention of thy glory in all my actions; that whether I eat or drink, or whatever I do, I may do all to the honour of thee my beloved.

O bounteous God, to all thy favours add this one, of making me eſteem thee above them all: let nothing ſeem pleaſant to me, but that which is pleaſing to thee; and let me never think any thing tedious or troubleſome, that may promote thy glory.

O my good God, keep me always thine, and let nothing ever be able to divorce me from thy love. Extinguiſh the impure flame of luſt, and whatever evil inclination thou ſeeſt in me.

Give me, O Lord, an excellent ſpirit, a ſpirit active and vigorous in the performance of my duty. Raiſe thou the power of my ſoul by thy love; that I may love thee with all my heart, praiſe thee acceptably, and honour thee unfeignedly all the days of my life. Let me have no life, but in thee; no care, but to ſerve, pleaſe, and enjoy thee; no ambition, but thy glory.

O my God, I humbly, I earneſtly pray to thee, to give me continual ſupplies of thy grace; that I may continue in thy love to my life's end; that being faithful unto death, I may receive the crown of life, through the merits and mercies of Jeſus thy beloved. *Amen, Amen.*

A Prayer for Monday *Evening.*

O Thou great and glorious God, who takeſt pleaſure in thoſe that come unto thee with faith; look down, I beſeech thee with pity and compaſſion upon me, who fall low on my knees before thee, confeſſing that my life has been in divers inſtances very provoking to thy divine majeſty.

What ſhall I ſay unto thee, O thou preſerver of men! O let the infinite merits of my dear Redeemer make ſatisfaction for me; and for his ſake, I moſt earneſtly beſeech thee, to be merciful unto me in the pardon and forgiveneſs of all my ſins. Lay not to my charge, O Lord, the ſins which I have this day been guilty of; but let thoſe and all other the follies of my life paſt, be for ever blotted out of thy remembrance; and receive me, I beſeech thee, into thy favour, which I value above all the happineſs of this world.

Give me a lively ſenſe of the folly and danger of ſin, that I may truly and ſincerely abhor that which is evil, cleave to that which is good, and with an unwearied diligence follow after the things which make for my everlaſting peace.

But, O Lord, becauſe I am a weak and frail creature, and am encompaſſed about with many temptations, O do thou vouchſafe to ſtrengthen and aſſiſt me with thy grace, that through thy moſt mighty power, I may be enabled to withſtand all the allurements of the world, the fleſh and the devil; [particularly---here name the ſins you are moſt prone to.] Let thy holy Spirit direct

direct and rule my heart, that I may think and do always ſuch things as be rightful, and pleaſe thee both in will and deed.

Thou never faileſt to help and govern them, who fly unto thee for ſuccour; O keep me, I beſeech thee, under the conduct of thy good providence, and make me to have perpetual fear and love of thy holy name, that I may never dare to do any thing that will offend thee, but be at all times ready to obey thy bleſſed will, and chearfully to accompliſh thoſe things which thou wouldſt have me to do.

Let no difficulties or dangers in my chriſtian warfare, affrighten me from my duty; but give me ſuch a courage and reſolution as will ſupport me under all diſcouragements, carry me through all trials, and enable me to triumph over the great enemy of my ſalvation, that having by thy divine aſſiſtance fought the good fight, and finiſhed my courſe, I may at laſt receive that crown of glory, which thou haſt promiſed to thy ſoldiers and ſervants, through the merits, and for the ſake of the great captain of our ſalvation, Jeſus Chriſt the righteous.

Extend thy mercies, O Lord, to the whole race of mankind, and in a more particular manner be gracious to this church and nation; bleſs all degrees of men among us, from the higheſt to the loweſt, and more eſpecially thy ſervant, our ſovereign Lord the King. And grant that every one, from the higheſt to the loweſt, may faithfully endeavour to promote thy glory, and the publick good.

Look

Look with pity and compaſſion upon all in affliction; ſtrengthen and ſupport them under their troubles, and give them, in thy good time, eaſe and deliverance.

Bleſs all my friends and relations, [more particularly **] vouchſafe to ſuit thy graces and bleſſings to our ſeveral neceſſities of body and ſoul.

And now, O Father of mercies! in an humble ſenſe of thy great goodneſs, I adore and praiſe thy glorious majeſty for all thy manifold bleſſings and mercies; particularly for thoſe of the day paſt: I bleſs thee, O Lord, for whatever good I have done, and whatever evil I have eſcaped; for preſerving me in health and ſafety; for providing ſo plentifully for me; but above all, I praiſe and magnify thy holy name, for the redemption of the world by the death and paſſion of thy dear ſon. O give me grace, to make a right uſe and improvement of theſe and all thy other mercies.

Be thou pleaſed, O Lord, ſtill to continue to me thy favour and protection: preſerve me this night from all evil, but eſpecially from that of ſin; give thy holy angels charge over me, that no evil accident may come near to hurt me; and raiſe me up again in health and ſafety, with a heart full of love to thee, and zeal to thy ſervice, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord, who has taught us thus to pray.

Our Father, &c.

A Prayer for Tueſday *Morning.*

O Eternal God; who madeſt all things for man, and man for thy glory, ſanctify my body and ſoul, my thoughts and my affections, my words and actions, my paſſions and intentions; that whatſoever I ſhall think, or do, or ſpeak, may be by me deſigned to the glorification of thy name, and by thy bleſſing may be ſucceſsful and effectual in the work of God, as far as it can be capable. Lord, turn my neceſſities into virtue, the works of nature into grace; by making them orderly, regular, temperate, and ſubordinate to the ends of religion. And let no pride or ſelf-ſeeking, no covetouſneſs or revenge, no vanity or affection, no little ends or low imaginations, pollute my ſpirit, or unhallow any of my words or actions; but let my body be a ſervant of my ſpirit, and both body and ſpirit ſervants of Jeſus; that doing all things for thy glory here, I may be a partaker of thy glory hereafter, through Jeſus Chriſt.

Lord, teach me to watch over all my ways, that I may never ſin againſt thee. Set a watch before my mouth, and keep the door of my lips, that I offend not in my tongue, either againſt piety or charity. Teach me to think of nothing but thee, and what is in order to thy glory and ſervice; to ſpeak of nothing but thee, and thy glories; and to do nothing but what becomes thy ſervant, whom thy infinite mercy, by the graces of the holy ſpirit, hath ſealed up to the day of redemption.

O

O my God, keep my love always watchful and on its guard; that I may reſiſt all temptations to evil: keep my love warm with an habitual zeal; that I may lay hold on all ſeaſons, occaſions, and opportunities of doing good.

Let thy love, O thou that only art worthy to be loved, make me careful and induſtrious to perſwade and engage others to love thee, and to keep thy commands, as well as myſelf: O let me ever be ſeeking occaſions to excite others to adore and love thee.

I know, O holy Lord, thou needeſt not my ſervice; but, I beſeech thee, accept my humble deſire of being ſerviceable to thee, and bleſs me but with ſtrength and opportunities for it; and, if it may be thy holy will, with ſucceſs therein.

Fill my mind, I beſeech thee, with divine thoughts, that I may have ſomething worthy to communicate and impart to thoſe I converſe with. Inſpire my heart with the devouteſt affections; that my behaviour may be a holy incentive, and may raiſe up holy flames in the breaſts of all that are about me.

Lord, let all my actions be pious and prudent; let me be wiſe as a ſerpent, innocent as a dove; and my whole life exemplary, juſt, and charitable.

O my God, let all my actions ſpeak my love and obedience to thy commandments: and thou having poſſeſſed my ſoul, and all my faculties, during my whole life; let me poſſeſs thy glories in the fruition of a happy eternity, through the infinite merits of my crucified Saviour.

O holy Lord, I beſeech thee, never ſuffer any perſon to have cauſe to accuſe their relation to me, or acquaintance with me, for betraying them into ſin here, or miſery hereafter: but grant that all that are under my care or power, may receive ſuch wholſome influence from me, as may nouriſh all chriſtian practice among them: and grant, O Lord, that my behaviour and example may be ſuch to all, that I may never prove to any an occaſion of falling. Let me never contribute any thing to that power which vice has gotten in the world; but with a ſteady courage oppoſe all impiety, how cuſtomary or faſhionable ſoever; let me think nothing honourable, but what is good: engage, animate, and inflame my benumbed breaſt, to the moſt eager and vigorous endeavours of receiving virtue to the eſteem and reputation of all men: and let the conſciouſneſs of my former ſloth and unfaithfulneſs in all parts of my ſtewardſhip excite me to a more diligent and induſtrious improvement of all thoſe advantages thou haſt put into my hands, for thy glory, and the benefit of my neighbour, and the eternal joy of my own ſoul: grant this for Jeſus Chriſt his ſake.

Grant, O gracious Lord, that by an aſſiduous practice of my duty, I may arrive to ſuch a guſt and reliſh of it as may ſupplant all ſenſual delight in my own heart, and may qualify me alſo to let others know how ſweet it is to ſerve the Lord: that I may be an effectual, though unworthy, inſtrument of drawing many to the obedience of Chriſt. And grant, that renouncing all the vain ambition of this world,

I may

I may aſpire to no other honour, but that of being approved by thee as a good and faithful ſervant; that by thy mercy, having my infirmities covered, and my ſincerity accepted, I may at the laſt be admitted into the joy of my Lord, through the merits of my bleſſed Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. *Amen.*

O God, the ſtrength of all that put their truſt in thee, mercifully accept my prayers; and becauſe, through the weakneſs of my mortal nature, I can do no good thing without thee; grant me the help of thy grace, that in keeping thy commandments I may pleaſe thee both in will and deed, through Jeſus Chriſt. *Amen.*

A Prayer for Tueſday *Evening.*

O Moſt great and glorious Lord God; who art juſt and terrible in thy judgments to all obſtinate and rebellious ſinners, but of infinite pity and compaſſion to ſuch as truly repent and turn unto thee! hear, I beſeech thee, the prayers of thy humble ſervant for pardon and forgiveneſs of all my ſins.

O let the infinite value of the ſufferings of thy Son Jeſus Chriſt be accepted by thee, as an atonement for all my follies and tranſgreſſions; and for his ſake, I beſeech thee, to be reconciled unto me, who acknowledge my vileneſs, and am unfeignedly ſorry that I have ever offended thee, to whom I owe all the returns of love, duty, and obedience that can poſſibly be paid by a creature to his Creator.

Give me ſuch a true and unfeigned repentance of all my ſins, as may produce in me a thorough

thorough change and amendment of life: open thou my eyes, that I may ſee and obſerve all the evil diſpoſitions of my corrupt nature, and by the aſſiſtance of thy good ſpirit, may be enabled to mortify and ſubdue them, and to bring my mind to an entire conformity to thy bleſſed will.

Grant that the remembrance of my paſt follies and miſcarriages may make me more careful of my actions for the time to come, and more watchful againſt thoſe ſnares and temptations, which have at any time betrayed me.

Let the conſideration of thy patience and forbearance excite in my heart ſuch a ſincere love to thee, that neither riches nor honour, nor any thing elſe that this world can offer, may be ever able to draw me from my duty.

Convince me, O Lord, that ſin is the greateſt of all evils; that guilt and miſery are always inſeparable, and that there is no true happineſs in this life, but what reſults from the teſtimony of a good conſcience, and the hopes of thy favour; and grant that theſe momentous truths may be ſo deeply impreſt on my mind, that I may make it the great ſtudy and care of my whole life to be of the number of thoſe, whom thou loveſt and delighteſt in.

Give me grace, O merciful Father, to lay aſide every weight, and the ſin that does ſo eaſily beſet me, that I may run with patience the race which thou haſt ſet before me. Deliver me from an immoderate care and concern for the things of this world; and give me ſuch an entire acquieſcence in thy divine will and pleaſure,

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ſuch a perfect dependance on thine infinite wiſdom and goodneſs, that no envious nor diſcontented, no murmuring nor repining thoughts may poſſeſs my heart, but a chearful and thankful ſpirit may at all times rule and govern me: and whatever ſhare of temporal good things thou ſhalt be pleaſed to give me, O give me grace to employ it to thy glory, the good of others, and the eternal benefit of my immortal ſoul. All which I humbly beg, for the merits and ſake of thy beloved Son Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.

Extend thy mercy, O God, to all mankind: in a more particular manner be gracious to theſe ſinful nations; pardon our great and crying ſins; avert the judgments which we have moſt juſtly deſerved, and give us grace to turn from all our evil ways, that thou mayeſt delight to dwell among us, and mayeſt be our God, and we thy people.

Bleſs and preſerve our ſovereign lord the king; and grant that all who are in authority under him, may faithfully endeavour to promote thy glory, and the good and welfare of this church and nation.

Look with pity and compaſſion upon all thy afflicted ſervants: be a father to the fatherleſs, and a huſband to the widow; heal the ſick, ſupply the wants of the poor and needy; and grant to all that are in affliction, a patient ſubmiſſion to thy bleſſed will.

Bleſs all my friends and relations, eſpecially ----reward all that have done me good, and forgive all that have done or wiſhed me evil; and vouchſafe to every one of us from the higheſt to

the loweſt, whatever thy great wiſdom knoweſt to be needful both for our ſouls and bodies.

And now, O moſt merciful Father, in an humble ſenſe of thy great goodneſs, I adore and praiſe thy glorious name for all the manifeſtations of thy love and kindneſs vouchſafed unto me.

I bleſs thee for my being, for my reaſon, and and all the endowments and faculties of my ſoul and body; for my health, friends, food and rayment, and all other comforts and conveniencies of my life; for thy continual care, and watchful providence over me, through the whole courſe of my life; and particularly for thy preſervation the day paſt.

Give me grace, O Lord, I beſeech thee, to make a right uſe and improvement of all thy bleſſings; and be thou graciouſly pleaſed to take me, and all that belong to me, this night, under the care and protection of thy fatherly providence. Give thy holy angels charge over us, that no evil may come near to hurt us; and grant us refreſhments of ſoul and body, as may enable us chearfully to go through the duties of that ſtation wherein thou haſt placed us; and when thou ſhalt be pleaſed to call us out of this world, O let us be found of the number of thy faithful ſervants, through the merits of Chriſt Jeſus, our bleſſed ſaviour and redeemer; for whom my ſoul does bleſs and praiſe thee, and in whoſe moſt holy words, I ſum up all our wants, ſaying,

Our Father, &c.

A Prayer for Wedneſday *Morning.*

O Moſt gracious God! who art the author of all the good things that I enjoy; in thee I live, and move, and have my being; and to thy good providence I aſcribe it, that I am now in health and ſafety, that I have enjoyed the comfortable refreſhments of the night paſt, and that none of thoſe evils which I have juſtly deſerved, have come nigh me, or my dwelling; for theſe, O Lord, and for all thy other mercies, I deſire to adore and bleſs thy glorious name, humbly beſeeching thee to accept this my morning ſacrifice of praiſe and thankſgiving, in and through the merits and mediation of my dear redeemer.

For his ſake, O Lord, I humbly beſeech thee, to pardon all my ſins, and grant that a due ſenſe of thy mercies may be ſo deeply impreſſed upon my mind, that I may love thee above all things, and manifeſt the ſincerity of that love, by a conſtant and habitual care to do what is pleaſing in thy ſight.

O Lord! there is nothing that I deſire ſo much, as to be of the number of thy faithful ſervants; to this end vouchſafe me the aſſiſtance of thy good ſpirit, to enable me to withſtand the temptations of this wicked world, and with an undaunted courage and reſolution, to bear up under all the trials and difficulties which I ſhall meet with in my chriſtian warfare.

Grant, O Lord, that I may never have any fellowſhip with the unfruitful works of darkneſs, nor grieve thy bleſſed Spirit by any impure and

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ſinful deſires; but as I have given up myſelf to the ſervice and obedience of my great lord and maſter Jeſus Chriſt; ſo teach me to walk in his laws, to conform myſelf to his precepts, and to endeavour, as much as in me lies, to imitate his example.

Let my converſation be always ſuch as becometh the goſpel; and grant that I may daily endeavour to mortify my corrupt inclinations; to cleanſe myſelf from all filthineſs of fleſh and ſpirit, and to bring every inordinate deſire to the obedience of thy will.

Give me a heart truly honeſt and upright, and ſo ſtedfaſt and immoveable in the ways of truth and juſtice, that no worldly intereſt or advantage, how promiſing or great ſoever, may be able to ſhake my integrity.

In the uſe of honeſt and lawful means, give me grace to depend upon thy providence, and to reſt contented under all the diſpenſations of thy infinite wiſdom and goodneſs. And though thou ſhouldſt ſee fit to deprive me of any, or even all the comforts of this life; yet, O gracious father, leave me not deſtitute of thoſe things that accompany ſalvation; nor deny me thy favour, which is better than life itſelf: whatever thou art pleaſed to deprive me of, yet take not from me, I beſeech thee, the comforts of thy holy Spirit; but in all the troubles and diſappointments of this world, in all the calamities and trials I ſhall meet with here, be thou my only refuge and my ſupport, my ſtay and my truſt, my ſaviour and mighty deliverer. Stand by me in all trials, ſuccour me in every temptation,

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ſupport me in diſcouragements, and adviſe me in all difficult caſes: but eſpecially, O Lord, I moſt importunately beſeech thee, that when the time of my diſſolution draws nigh, and all things here begin to fail me, thou wouldſt then vouchſafe to ſtrengthen and ſupport me, and at laſt receive me into thy bleſſed kingdom; through the merits, and for the ſake of my eternal advocate, and mediator, Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.

Be thou pleaſed, of thy great goodneſs, O Lord, to continue to me thy favour and protection. Direct and guide me, ſanctify and preſerve me. Let thy watchful providence be my guard and defence. Keep me in thy fear all the day long, and grant that I may take nothing in hand but what is agreeable to thy bleſſed will. Into thy hands I commend my ſoul and body, and all that are related to me, humbly beſeeching thee, to keep us from all evil; to lead us into all good; and to carry us ſafely through the dangers and temptations of this world, to that place of everlaſting reſt and peace, which thou haſt prepared for thy faithful ſervants, through the merits of thy beloved ſon Jeſus Chriſt our Lord; in whoſe words I recommend the wants of all mankind, together with my own.

Our Father, &c.

A Prayer for Wedneſday *Evening.*

O Infinite love! it is my duty and my happineſs to love thee; but alas! my own ſad experience teaches me, how little able I am to love.

Ah! Lord, there is a dark cloud of ignorance ſpread over my ſoul, that intercepts thy beams; I cannot clearly ſee, I cannot fully know, how lovely thou art.

Ah! Lord, whenever any gleams of thy lovelineſs break in upon my ſpirit, and attract my will; a crowd of ſtrange loves importune and tempt me to wander after them.

Since, O my God, I can of myſelf neither know, nor love thee; ſince I cannot by my own ſtrength do thoſe things thou requireſt, nor think ſo much as one good thought; whither ſhall I fly, but only to thy free unbounded goodneſs? Thou art my hope, my help, and my ſalvation; thou only canſt teach and enable me to know, and to love thy great goodneſs.

Oh! Lord, that I could wait and long for thy ſalvation. Oh! that I could ſo mind the things above, as to be a ſtranger in affections to the things below.

Oh! that my ſoul could be wrapt up to heaven in deſire; or that mine eyes, by the light of faith could ſee but a glimpſe of the heavenly glory! How ſhould I trample upon theſe poor vanities of the earth! How willingly ſhould I endure all ſorrows, all torments! How ſcornfully ſhould I paſs by all pleaſures! How ſhould I long for my diſſolution.

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I have ſeen enough of this earth; and have loved it too much. Oh! let me now ſee heaven; and love it ſo much the more, as the things there are more worthy to be loved.

Alas! Lord, it is my miſery, that I love my pain; how long ſhall theſe vanities thus beſet me? it is thou only that canſt turn away mine eyes from regarding theſe follies, and my heart from affecting them: thou only, who as thou wilt one day receive my ſoul into heaven, ſo now before hand canſt fix my ſoul upon heaven and thee. Oh! carry it up therefore; thou that haſt created, and redeemed it, carry it up to thy glory. Let me not always be thus dull and brutiſh; let not theſe ſcales of earthly affections always dim and blind my eyes: illuminate them from above; and in thy light let me ſee light.

My God, look down upon thy wretched pilgrim; and teach me to look up to thee, and to ſee thy goodneſs in the land of the living. O thou that haſt prepared a place for my ſoul, prepare my ſoul for that place; prepare it with holineſs; prepare it with deſire; and while it ſojourns on earth, let it dwell in heaven with thee, beholding ever the glorious beauty of thy face.

O thou whom my ſoul loveth; ſince thou haſt left the world, what was there ever in it worthy of my love? Ah! let all my affections aſcend after thee, and never return to the earth more: for whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I deſire in compariſon of thee.

O moſt glorious God, though thou filleſt all places, yet thy glory is moſt manifeſted in heaven,

and there thy majeſty does moſt illuſtriouſly dwell; and to thy throne there we will lift up our hearts when we pray. Let my ſoul therefore fly up to thee, when I pray, in heavenly thoughts, deſires, and love: and let me ſavour nothing of earth, whenever I treat with thee of heaven.

Lord, give me grace, in imitation of the bleſſed ſpirits above, to ſet thee always before me. Raviſh my ſoul with a lively ſenſe of thy amiableneſs. Ah! vouchſafe me one ſhort glimpſe of thy good. Oh! that I could once taſte and ſee how gracious thou art; that all things elſe might become taſteleſs to me: then would my deſires be always flying up to thee: then ſhould I render thee love, praiſe, and obedience, pure and chearful, conſtant and zealous, univerſal and uniform; like that the holy angels render thee in heaven.

O my God, let the love of thee and heavenly things ſo entirely poſſeſs my heart, and all my affections, that there may be no room left for earthly vanities. Fill my heart with thankſgivings for the bleſſings, praiſes of the excellencies, adoration of the majeſty, and a zeal for the glory of thee my beloved.

Oh! that I could forget all other things whenever I preſent myſelf before thee, my God; that I could aſcend in my thoughts, deſires, and reſolutions, to heaven, where Jeſus is; and when I come down again to converſe with things below, could look upon them with contempt, to this end, I beſeech thee, fill every faculty of my ſoul with devotion, that I may be poſſeſt with zeal and religious affections; loving thee above all things

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in this world, worſhipping thee with the humbleſt adorations, and frequent addreſſes; continually feeding upon the apprehenſions of thy divine ſweetneſs and infinite excellencies, and obſervations of all thy righteous commandments; that at laſt, from this deliciouſneſs of employment, I may paſs into the ſociety of ſaints and angels, whoſe work it is, with eternal joy and thankſgiving, to ſing praiſes to him that ſits upon the throne, to the holy ſpirit, and to the lamb for ever: to whom be aſcribed, as is moſt due, all honour and praiſe, dominion and thanks, by all angels and all men, and all creatures; now, and to all eternity. *Amen*, *Amen*.

Refreſh, O Lord! my body with quiet reſt and ſleep, and my ſoul with the conſolations of thy holy Spirit; and when thou ſhalt think fit to take me out of this world, give me everlaſting reſt and peace in thy eternal kingdom.

Grant, alſo I beſeech thee, Almighty God, that as I do believe thine only begotton ſon, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, to have aſcended into the heavens; ſo I may always in heart and mind thither aſcend, and with him continually dwell, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghoſt, one God, world without end *Amen*; and who hath taught us when we pray to ſay, *Our Father*, &c.

A Prayer for Thurſday *Morning*.

O Lord, the creator and governor of the world! thou art a God of infinite power, wiſdom, and goodneſs, and thy tender mercies are over all thy works; I thy unworthy ſervant fall low on my knees before thy throne of grace,

to renew the tribute of my humbleſt praiſe and adoration to thy great glory and glorious majeſty.

Bleſſed be thy name, O God, for ſending thy Son our Lord Jeſus Chriſt into the world for the redemption of mankind, and for all the benefits and advantages which I have received thereby.

Bleſſed be thy holy name that I was born of chriſtian parents, and early dedicated to thee by baptiſm, and for all the means and opportunities which thou haſt given me of becoming wiſe unto ſalvation; for the aſſiſtance of thy good Spirit, and for inclining me ſo early to love and fear thee.

I thank thee, O Lord, for all the temporal bleſſings I have received; for that meaſure of health which I have enjoyed; for the many friends and relations thou haſt given me; and for that competent maintenance and proviſion thou haſt made for me. Particularly, O Lord, I bleſs thy holy name, that thou haſt protected me the night paſt from the powers of darkneſs, and every evil accident, and haſt now raiſed me up in health and ſafety to praiſe thy goodneſs.

O Lord, raiſe me up alſo, I pray thee, to newneſs of life, and grant me ſuch a ſenſe of thy goodneſs, as may excite in my heart a ſincere love to thee, and a holy care to pleaſe and obey thee in all things.

Pardon, I moſt humbly beſeech thee, all my paſt ingratitude, and undutiful behaviour towards thee, and let me never forget the many and great obligations thou haſt laid upon me to become thy faithful and obedient ſervant.

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I confeſs, O Lord, that I am not able of myſelf to pleaſe thee; but ſince thou haſt promiſed to give thy holy Spirit to them that aſk it, with an humble reliance on thy moſt gracious promiſes, I beſeech thee to vouchſafe me his divine aſſiſtance, to enable me to do my duty towards thee and towards all men.

Endue me, O moſt gracious God, with a ſpirit of true and fervent devotion to thee my creator and redeemer; with an honeſt, upright, and charitable heart, towards all my neighbours; and with a contented, meek, and humble mind, in every condition and ſtate of life, in which thou ſhalt be pleaſed to place me.

O Lord, convince me more and more of the vanity and emptineſs of all earthly enjoyments, that my heart being lifted up above the pleaſures of this life it may ſurely there be fixed, where true joys are to be found. Grant that I may ſeek thy kingdom and the righteouſneſs thereof in the firſt place, and prefer thy favour, and the teſtimony of a good conſcience, before the greateſt happineſs this world can promiſe me. Let neither hopes nor fears, neither pleaſure nor profit, be ever able to draw me from my duty; but being ſtedfaſt and unmoveable, I may always abound in the work of the Lord, knowing that my labour ſhall not be in vain in the Lord.

And now, O Lord, I humbly pray thee to take me and all that are near and dear unto me, this day, under the care and protection of thy good providence. We are ſafe ſo long as we are in thy hands; O let us never caſt away our confidence in thee, nor place it any where but in thee.

Be with us in all dangers and temptations, and keep us from all things that may hurt us; preſerve us more eſpecially from the ſin that does moſt eaſily betray and enſnare us. Give us ſuch a meaſure of health, and other temporal bleſſings as thou ſeeſt beſt and moſt fitting for us; and grant us the aſſiſtance of thy good Spirit, that in our ſeveral ſtations and employments, we may keep a conſcience void of offence both towards thee, and towards all men, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord; in whoſe moſt holy words, I commend both my own and the wants and neceſſities of all mankind.

Our Father, &c.

A Prayer for Thurſday *Evening.*

O Almighty and moſt gracious God, the aid of all that truſt in thee; look down with an eye of mercy and pity upon me, thy poor creature, who do fly to thee for ſuccour.

Thou ſeeſt, O holy Lord, that I am ſet in the midſt of ſo many and great dangers, that without thy help I cannot avoid my ruin; my ghoſtly enemies are every moment ſoliciting, inticing, alluring, or tempting me to evil: Oh! be merciful to me, ſave, help, and deliver me.

Thou ſeeſt, O my God, how infirm I am; and how ready my own deceitful heart is to betray itſelf to the tempter. Alas! I juſtly ſuſpect my own weakneſs, I fear the power and policy of my enemies; and therefore do moſt paſſionately and earneſtly beſeech thee, not to leave me to myſelf; but ſupport me by thy mighty grace; and by how much the more I diſcover my weakneſs,

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ſo much the more to ſhew forth thy power in me.

Lord, thou knoweſt whereof I am made; remember then that I am but fleſh: and fleſh, O Lord, is weak and frail; it is thy Spirit, thy Spirit alone, that can uphold me: O eſtabliſh me with thy free Spirit; that no temptation may ever be able to ſhake my conſtancy; but that I may continue thy faithful and unfeigned ſervant to my life's end.

O Lord, I beſeech thee, remember the frailty of me thy poor creature, and vouchſafe to keep me thine for ever: direct by thy wiſdom, ſanctify by thy grace, and govern by thy providence, all the affections of my heart, and the members of my body: be pleaſed, O gracious Lord, to preſerve me both in body and ſoul, from ſin and danger; and aſſiſt me ſo by thy grace, that I may be enabled to diſcharge my whole duty, and glorify thy name. Lord thou knoweſt that my ways are not in my own power, wherefore I commit them to thee, who art able to bring them to paſs. Thou haſt hitherto been my ſuccour; leave me not, neither forſake me, O God of my ſalvation. Withold not any good thing from me, becauſe of my unworthineſs: nor deal with me as I deſerve; but as I deſire, and hope for. I put my truſt in no other but thee; in whom no one that hath truſted, was ever diſappointed, or aſhamed. Oh! therefore, do not deſpiſe me; nor turn away my prayers, nor thy mercy from me; but hear me, and help me, I humbly beſeech thee, for Jeſus Chriſt his ſake.

O my God, look down upon thy wretched pilgrim; and teach me to look up to thee, and to ſee thy goodneſs in the land of the living. Thou that boughteſt heaven for me, guide me thither, and for the price it coſt thee, for thy mercies ſake, in ſpite of all temptations, enlighten thou my ſoul, direct, and crown it.

Dear Jeſus, hear me; and though ſatan hath deſired to have me, that he may ſift me as wheat; yet do thou, O bleſſed Mediator, pray for me, that my faith fail not. Oh! be thou my ſtrength: I being not able of myſelf, to ſtruggle with the ſlighteſt temptations.

How often have I turned my back in the day of battle? How many times have I been a confederate with thy enemies? O my God, ſuffer me no more, I beſeech thee, to turn thy grace into wantonneſs, to make thy mercy an occaſion of ſecurity. Let me no more thus ſtart aſide, like a broken bow; but do thou lift up my hands that hang down, and ſtrengthen my feeble knees, that I may faint not in this warfare. Oh! grant me power and ſtrength to get the victory, and to triumph over the world, the fleſh, and the devil; and to continue thy unfeigned ſervant unto my life's end; that being faithful unto death, I may receive a crown of life, through thy merits and mercies, O holy and ever bleſſed Jeſus. *Amen, Amen.*

O God, I beſeech thee mercifully to hear my prayers; protect me this night under the ſhadow of thy wings, and grant, that I may both perceive and know what things I ought to do; and alſo, may have grace and power faithfully to fulfil

fil the ſame, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord. *Amen.*

Our Father, &c.

A Prayer for Friday *Morning.*

LORD, be merciful to me, a poor, miſerable ſinner: heal my ſoul; for I have ſinned againſt thee. Oh! be merciful to my unrighteouſneſs, hear my prayers, and accept my repentance for Jeſus Chriſt his ſake.

I have ſinned, O Lord God, I have ſinned, and done evil in thy ſight. I have grievouſly offended thee throughout the whole courſe of my life, by omiſſions and commiſſions, by ignorance and preſumption, by careleſneſs and vanity. Lord, which of thy commandments have I not broken? Which of thy ordinances have I not profaned? Which of thy mercies have I not contemned? Ah me! my whole life hath been as one continued act of ſinning againſt thee. If I pray; it is ſo coldly and remiſly, as if I needed not, or cared not to be relieved: if I praiſe thee with my lips, yet my heart is far from thee. My faith is weak, my hope infirm, my charity little, my real good works none at all. My thoughts are often vain, and my words triffling, impertinent, and uſeleſs; my actions are unprofitable, and wicked.

Thus, O Lord, I am become out of meaſure ſinful: and ſince I have thus choſen death, I am unworthy to partake of thy happineſs. But do thou, O my God, deliver me from the ſecond death, the lake of fire and brimſtone. I have given thee juſt cauſe to let looſe thy wrath and indig-

indignation againſt me, which will be to my utter ruin, if thy mercy do not help me.

Lord, I acknowledge my guilt, and my ſin is ever before thee. I beſeech thee, O Lord, to have mercy upon me; and ſince my neceſſity forces me to be importunate, again I cry, have mercy upon me. I know thou art a moſt merciful father; and therefore, though by my ſins I am unworthy to be called thy child, yet I hope thy bowels will yearn on me. I proſtrate myſelf before thee, begging of thee, for thy dearly beloved ſon, my Lord Jeſus Chriſt his ſake, and by the merits of his croſs and paſſion, to forgive me freely and fully all that is paſt, from the beginning of my life to this moment.

My God, I humbly, I earneſtly beg mercy, pardon and forgiveneſs for all my ſins; Oh! be thou graciouſly pleaſed to remit them all, and to receive me into thy favour, for Jeſus Chriſt his ſake. *Amen.*

Lord, make me an inſtance of thy mercy: and grant, that when I have received ſo excellent and undeſerved a favour, I may, as I earneſtly hope I ſhall, for ever after beware of falling back into the like ſin and miſery. Convert me, O gracious God, as well as pardon me; and enable me moſt obediently to ſerve, and moſt entirely to pleaſe thee, by ſpending the reſt of my time in newneſs of life, and all holy converſation. Heal all my backſlidings, repair all my breaches, mortify all my irregular and inordinate deſires; and ſanctify me throughout both in ſoul and body. Oh! give me hearty repentance, and ſincere contrition for all my ſins paſt; and

give

give me thy preventing and reſtraining grace for the future; and let me never wilfully offend thee any more.

O Lord, hear me, and graciouſly anſwer me; and let me not go from thy preſence without a bleſſing; a bleſſing of pardon and peace, a bleſſing of thy ſpirit and of thy grace. Ah! ſpeak peace to my poor heart; and let me know and feel that thou forgiveſt me. Turn not thy merciful ears from my prayers; but hear me, and help me, pardon and accept me; and do for me, and for all thy ſervants, abundantly above what we can aſk or think, for Jeſus Chriſt his ſake: to whoſe interceſſion for me do thou ſay, *Amen*; and it ſhall be to me according to thy word. *Amen*, *Amen*.

A Form of General Interceſſion.

O Eternal God, who art the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and the God of all mercy, relieving all that fly to thee for help; hear the humble prayers of me thy poor ſervant, who am unworthy to aſk any petition for myſelf, yet in duty am bound to pray for others. Oh! deſpiſe me not for my unworthineſs, caſt not out my prayers, nor turn thy mercy from me; but hear me, and help me, and accept my poor petitions, for Jeſus Chriſt his ſake.

Let thy mercy, O Lord, deſcend upon the whole race of mankind, however diſtreſſed, or whereſoever diſperſed over the face of the whole earth: enlighten all that ſit in darkneſs; all Jews, Turks, Infidels, Atheiſts, and Hereticks: and bring all ſinners to true repentance before it be

be too late. Let that grace of thine, O God, which bringeth ſalvation, effectually appear to every one of us; teaching us to deny all ungodlineſs and worldly luſts, and to live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly in this preſent evil world.

And in theſe realms and dominions, I beſeech thee, in a ſpecial manner, ever to bleſs thy ſervant, our ſovereign Lord the King: preſerve his perſon, and proſper his reign; endue him with all thoſe gifts and graces which may make him a terror to evil works, and a great promoter of thy glory: make his government a laſting bleſſing to theſe kingdoms; that under him we may lead quiet and peaceable lives, in all godlineſs and honeſty.

Bleſs him, and all his royal relations, with a great meaſure of all temporal good things, and with eternal glory in the world to come.

And let thy bleſſing, O Lord, be upon all orders and degrees of men among us, from the higheſt to the loweſt. Bleſs all the nobility with true piety, firm loyalty, and uncorrupted policy. Grant that they may excel others as much in goodneſs, as in greatneſs; and make them all ſignal inſtruments of thy glory, and examples of every divine grace and virtue.

Bleſs all the judges and magiſtrates with upright hearts, fearing thee, and hating covetouſneſs.

Bleſs the gentry and commonalty with hearts religious towards thee their God, loyal towards thee their God, loyal towards their King, and loving and charitable to each other.

Bleſs

Bleſs that part of thy church, which thine own right hand hath planted, and hitherto (bleſſed be thy name) ſo mercifully protected amongſt us: Lord, water it with the dew of thy heavenly bleſſing, that it may ſpring and flouriſh ſtill more and more, to thy glory. Aſſert thine own truth, O God, and maintain thine own cauſe in the world; and ſuffer not fooliſh men to blaſpheme thy name.

Bleſs, O Lord, this great city with proſperity and peace: open our eyes to ſee, and incline our hearts, in good earneſt to regard the great things which truly belong to our peace; and let us never provoke thee to hide them from our eyes.

Have mercy, O God, upon this ſinful land and nation: in mercy pardon our many great and crying ſins, compoſe our unhappy differences, root out all errors and hereſies; and eſtabliſh and ſettle us upon foundations of truth and peace, never to be ſhaken.

Remove the evils we ſtill lie under; avert thoſe we have juſt cauſe to fear: and however thou ſhalt think fit to correct us for our ſins; yet never deprive us of the means of our reformation. Leave us not to ourſelves, to the luſts of our own hearts; but appoint what thou ſeeſt moſt fit to reduce us: do thou, O Lord, by the ſweet inſinuations of thy bleſſed Spirit, ſubdue our obſtinate perverſeneſs; and grant unto us thy heavenly grace, that we may not turn again to our ſins.

O thou, to whom all things are poſſible, who haſt done ſo great things for us, work yet a greater

greater miracle in us; and of a profane and ungrateful nation, make us a holy people, acceptable to thee. Let all ranks and conditions of men as univerſally and induſtriouſly combine to propitiate, as they had done to provoke thee; that ſo, by bringing forth fruits of repentance, we may eſcape thy wrath, both temporal and eternal.

Have mercy upon all the ſons and daughters of affliction; whether diſtreſſed in body or mind: do thou, O moſt gracious Lord, in thy good time, comfort and relieve them, and cauſe the broken bones again to rejoice: thoſe that are troubled or perſecuted for conſcience, good Lord, ſupport and comfort them under their ſufferings; and grant them a happy deliverance out of all their troubles: thoſe that are afflicted in body, good Lord, give them eaſe; make thou all their beds in their ſickneſs; Lord, viſit them with thy ſalvation; reſtore them to joy, peace, and comfort, if it be thy bleſſed will; pardon their ſins, and ſave their ſouls, for Jeſus Chriſt his ſake.

Bleſs thine own portion, the miniſters of thy ſacred word and ordinances (particularly thoſe to whom I am moſt obliged) make them all burning and ſhining lights, that they may adorn that holy religion they profeſs, and put to ſilence the ignorance of fooliſh men; and by their good preaching and holy living, promote the glory of thy name, and the good of ſouls.

And now, Lord, let thy bleſſing, I beſeech thee, be upon me, and all my near relations and friends, neighbours and acquaintance [particularly---]

ticularly---] Lord, thou knoweſt all our conditions, all our deſires, all our wants: Oh! be thou graciouſly pleaſed to ſuit thy graces and bleſſings to our ſeveral neceſſities of ſoul and body.

May thy holy Spirit guide our ſouls, and thy providence miniſter to our neceſſities. Let all things happen to us in that order and diſpoſition, which may beſt promote thy greateſt glory and our duty, our likeneſs to Chriſt, and the honour of this kingdom. And let thy grace and mercy preſerve us from the bitter pains of eternal death, and bring us to eternal life, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

Hear me, O Lord, and graciouſly anſwer me, I humbly beſeech thee; and do for me, and all thy ſervants, abundantly above what we are able to aſk or think. Hear me for them, and hear them for me; and hear thy Son our Lord Jeſus Chriſt for us all: in confidence of whoſe merits, and hope of his mediation, I preſent theſe ſupplications to thee, for his ſake, that they may be acceptable in thy ſight, and may obtain thy favour and bleſſing, even all that thou ſeeſt neceſſary for our ſouls and bodies, in order to thy glory, and our ſalvation. *Amen.*

O bleſſed Jeſu! thou that ſitteſt at the right hand of God, uſing all thy powerful intereſt there, in behalf of thy ſervants; I beſeech thee, join thy powerful interceſſions, with my humble ſuits, to the throne of grace; that for thy ſake I may be heard and accepted. *Amen, Amen.*

A Prayer for Friday *Evening.*

MOST great, moſt holy, and moſt glorious Lord God! thou haſt created the heavens and the earth, and all things that are therein; thou upholdeſt them all by the power of thy word, and the hoſt of heaven praiſeth thee: What am I, that ſhould preſume to ſpeak unto thee, or to lift up my eyes to that place of purity where thou dwelleſt?

O Lord! thou hateſt iniquity with a perfect hatred, yet I am aſſured, that thou delighteſt in the ways of mercy; that thou art a tender lover of ſouls; and not only permitteſt, but inviteſt us, miſerable creatures, to come unto thee.

With humble confidence, then, O Lord, I lift up my ſoul unto thee, beſeeching thee, in much mercy to look upon me, and to eaſe me of the burthen of my corrupt and ſinful inclinations: O caſt me not away from thy preſence; but for the ſake of my dear redeemer, receive me graciouſly to thy mercy; and let the merit of his bitter death and paſſion, atone for all the follies and miſcarriages of my life paſt. Forgive, I meekly beſeech thee, whatever I have done amiſs this day, and all my life paſt, either againſt thee, my neighbour, or myſelf; O cleanſe me from all my ſecret and unknown tranſgreſſions: And, O merciful father, grant that I may ſeriouſly conſider and reflect upon the foulneſs and deformity of ſin; and what dreadful threatnings thou haſt denounced againſt it; that I may become a true and ſincere mourner for my paſt ſins, and, as far as it is poſſible, redeem my miſ-

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ſpent time, by employing the remainder of my days in thy ſervice, and to thy glory. O make me wiſe unto ſalvation, and give me that hatred and abhorrence of ſin and iniquity, that I may abſtain from every kind and ſort of evil.

Give me, O Lord, a new heart, new affections, and new deſires; that I may love thee with more ſincerity, and ſerve thee with greater faithfulneſs than I have ever yet done.

Convince me of the vanity and uncertainty of all Things here below, and grant that I may make thee my only joy and my delight, my ſtay and my truſt, my guide and my counſellor; and be ſo delighted with the ways of thy commandments, that one day in thy ſervice may be dearer to me than a thouſand ſpent in vanity and folly.

Teach me, O Lord, ſo to number my days, that I may apply my heart unto true wiſdom; and grant that in the days of health and proſperity, I may conſider my latter end, and remember and provide for that great account which I muſt one day give before the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt; that when the hour of my departure ſhall come, I may meet death without fear and amazement; and with a well grounded hope of thy mercy and goodneſs, may chearfully reſign up my ſoul into thy hands; and may be willing and even deſirous to leave this world, when thou, my God, in thy great wiſdom ſhall ſee it fitting.

O Lord! let me never be ſeparated from thee; but grant that I may be of the number of thy faithful and obedient ſervants, who are united to thee by grace and good works in this life, and will hereafter live with thee in endleſs bliſs and happineſs,

happineſs, through the merits, and for the ſake of thy beloved Son Jeſus Chriſt, our Lord and only Saviour.

O Lord, to thy merciful providence I commend the wants and neceſſities of all mankind; cauſe the light of thy glorious goſpel to ſhine in all the dark corners of the earth. In a more eſpecial manner, I pray for the good and welfare of this church and nation to which I belong, beſeeching thee to pardon all our ſins, to turn away thy diſpleaſure from us, and to make us a peculiar people zealous of good works.

Protect and defend our ſovereign Lord the King, and grant that under him we may lead quiet and peaceable lives, in all godlineſs and honeſty.

Bleſs the work of faith, and labour of love of all thoſe who zealouſly endeavour to ſtop the torrent of vice, and to promote the intereſt of virtue and true religion among us.

Hear the cry of the poor and needy, give eaſe to thoſe that are under any affliction of mind or body, and lay not more upon them than thou wilt enable them to bear.

I pray thee, in a more eſpecial manner, to be gracious to all my friends and relations, and more particularly to -------- O Lord! thou art thoroughly acquainted with all our wants, O vouchſafe to give us what thou ſeeſt beſt and moſt fitting both for our ſouls and bodies.

Accept, O merciful Father, of my unfeigned praiſes for all thy bleſſings ſpiritual and temporal.

My

My health and ſafety, and all the comforts of my life, proceed from thy bounty and goodneſs: to thee therefore, I aſcribe all poſſible praiſe and thankſgiving, humbly beſeeching thee to grant me the continuance of thy mercy and goodneſs.

Take me, and---and all that belong to me this night, under the care and protection of thy good providence. Preſerve us from all perils and dangers, and all apprehenſion or dread of any. Give us ſuch refreſhing reſt and ſleep, as may fit us for the Duties of the day following; and if thou art pleaſed to add another day to our lives, grant that we make a right uſe and improvement of it, to thy glory, and the benefit of our immortal ſouls, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord, who in compaſſion to our infirmities, hath taught us thus to pray,

Our Father, &c.

A Prayer for Saturday *Morning*.

O Moſt bleſſed and moſt glorious Lord God, who art of infinite goodneſs and mercy! I thy creature whom thou haſt made, and to this moment haſt preſerved, do now preſent myſelf before thee, to offer up the morning ſacrifice of my unfeigned praiſes and thankſgivings; thy mercies are renewed to me every morning, and thy goodneſs follows me all the day long; thou viſiteſt me in the night ſeaſon, and every moment of my life is a new inſtance of thy mercy.

It is by thy goodneſs, O Lord, that I have this night ſlept ſecure, and am now raiſed up in health and ſafety. Praiſed therefore be thy name, O God, for of thee only cometh my ſalvation;

tion; thou art the God of my health, my ſaviour, and mighty deliverer; as long as I live I will magnify thee, O Lord, for a joyful and pleaſant thing it is to be thankful. O give me a heart always tuned to thy praiſes, which is my happineſs as well as my duty.

Imprint on my mind ſuch a deep ſenſe of thy mercies, that I may never provoke thee to withdraw thy favours from me: let not the bleſſings thou beſtoweſt on me, make me in love with this world: let neither covetouſneſs nor ambition; neither pride nor vanity; neither a contempt of others, nor a fond conceit of myſelf, be the effects of thy loving kindneſs towards me; but endue me with ſuch an humble and contented mind, ſuch a meek and reſigned ſpirit, ſuch a quiet and peaceable temper and behaviour, as becomes a creature and a ſinner; O let the conſideration of my unworthineſs ſuppreſs in me all proud and aſpiring thoughts, and all covetous and ambitious deſires; that being meek and lowly in my own eyes, I may find reſt unto my ſoul, and be filled with that grace, which thou haſt promiſed to the humble.

Fit and prepare me, O Lord, for every condition and change, but eſpecially for my great and laſt change. Strengthen my faith in the time of ſickneſs and trial, and forſake me not when my ſtrength faileth me. Let thy merciful ears, O Lord, be open to my prayers; and ſpare me O Lord moſt holy, O God moſt mighty, O holy and merciful ſaviour, thou moſt worthy judge eternal; ſuffer me not at my laſt hour, through any

any pains of body, or weakneſs of mind, to let go my dependance upon thee.

O let not the cruel enemy of ſouls affrighten me with terrors; but give thy holy angels charge over me; and let the conſolations of thy holy ſpirit fortify my mind, and diſſipate my fears, and be a reviving cordial to my ſoul at that laſt and momentous period of my life.

O Lord, leave me not to myſelf in that time of diſtreſs, when I ſhall ſtand in ſo much need of thee. Give me an unfeigned repentance of all my ſins, great love to thee, and charity to my neighbours, an entire ſubmiſſion to thy bleſſed will, and (if thou ſeeſt fitting) ſome fore-taſte and aſſurance of my ſalvation. But if thou, in thy great wiſdom, ſhall not ſee fitting to vouchſafe me ſo great a mercy; yet, O gracious Father, let me not fail in the great day of judgment to hear that bleſſed ſentence pronounced unto me, "well done, thou good and faithful ſervant, enter thou into thy maſter's joy." Grant this, O moſt gracious God, for thy mercies ſake in Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.

Be with me, O Lord, this day, in my going out and coming in; preſerve me from the dangers of evil company; from the deceitfulneſs of my own heart; and defend me more eſpecially from thoſe ſins that are moſt apt to betray and enſnare me.

Let thy bleſſing accompany all my honeſt labours and endeavours, and vouchſafe me ſuch a meaſure of health, and other temporal mercies, as thou ſeeſt beſt and moſt fitting for me.

I de-

I desire, O Lord, to leave myself, and all my affairs in thy hands, humbly beseeching thee to take me, and all that belong to me, under the care and protection of thy good providence, and so to bless, direct, and guide us in this life, that we may at last obtain that greatest of all blessings, the eternal salvation of our immortal souls, through the merits, and for the sake of thy dear Son, and our only Saviour, Jesus Christ the righteous; in the full extent of whose words, I desire to be heard for myself and all mankind.

Our Father, &c.

A Prayer for Saturday *Evening.*

O Eternal being! Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one God blessed for evermore; I thine unworthy servant adore thy glorious majesty, acknowledging my dependence upon thee, and that all I have proceeds from thine infinite bounty and goodness.

Thou hast shewn thyself a most kind and indulgent father; but alas! I have been an undutiful and disobedient child, and have made very ungrateful returns for these innumerable mercies and favours which thou hast bestowed upon me.

O Lord, my conscience accuses me of having done many things contrary to thy blessed will; of having acted foolishly and wickedly, contrary to my best and greatest interest.

I am sensible, O Lord, that the greatest concernments of this world are as nothing, when compared with eternity; and yet, how apt am

I to grow careleſs and remiſs in the great and important work of my ſalvation, and to ſuffer my affections to be carried away after the things of this life.

O Lord, the wages, and deſert, and puniſhment of ſin, is death; but thou art infinite in mercy, and willeſt not the death of a ſinner; remember then, I beſeech thee, thy tender mercies; and for the ſake and merits of my dear Redeemer, have mercy upon me, and be not angry with me for ever. Accept of that full, perfect and ſufficient ſacrifice, which thy beloved ſon offered upon the croſs; and through the merit of his bitter death and paſſion, pardon all my ſins; *** particularly thoſe which I have this day committed. O Lord, give me an intereſt in the blood of that immaculate lamb Jeſus Chriſt; and grant that I may never render thoſe ſufferings which he underwent for ſinners, ineffectual to the ſalvation of my ſoul.

Give me grace, ſeriouſly to conſider that it is my indiſpenſible duty to forſake every evil way. Poſſeſs my ſoul with juſt and lively apprehenſions of the infinite diſproportion there is between this world and the next; that I may make a right uſe and improvement of all thoſe gracious opportunities which thou art pleaſed to give me, of working out my ſalvation, and ſecuring an inheritance in that kingdom, which is to laſt for ever.

Let no temptations or allurements divert me from ſecuring the intereſt of my precious ſoul; whatever elſe I leave undone, let that be my great care and concern, the firſt and laſt of all

my thoughts, and the chief buſineſs and employment of my whole life.

O Lord! ſuffer not the affairs and buſineſs which I am engaged in, to draw my affections from heaven and heavenly things; but grant, that I may ſo paſs through things temporal, as not to loſe the things that are eternal, and that in all the concernments of this life, I may govern myſelf by the rules of temperance and ſobriety, juſtice and honeſty, prudence and moderation, and with an entire truſt and dependance on thy fatherly care and good providence; that having always before my eyes that great account which I muſt one day give, I may never dare to do any thing that may diſhonour thy name; nor be ſo wretchedly fooliſh, as to purchaſe any happineſs in this world at the expence of thy favour: but that making thy laws the rule of all my actions, I may approve myſelf to thee, as becometh thy ſervant; by being zealous and devout in thy ſervice; kind and charitable towards my neighbour; by being meek and patient, quiet and peaceable, humble and inoffenſive towards all men; and, as far as in me lies, uſeful and beneficial to the world; that ſo glorifying thee here upon earth, I may at my departure hence, enter into the joy of my Lord, and be for ever glorified in thy heavenly kingdom, through Jeſus Chriſt, my only ſaviour and redeemer.

Be gracious, O moſt merciful God, to the whole race of mankind, pity the deplorable ſtate of thoſe that know thee not, and have never heard of thy name. Reform the wicked and impeni-

impenitent, and let all that name the name of Chriſt depart from iniquity.

Bleſs our ſovereign Lord the King, and grant that under him we may lead quiet and peaceable lives in all godlineſs and honeſty.

Be mindful, O Lord, of all that are in any affliction or diſtreſs. Relieve and comfort thoſe that ſuffer for the teſtimony of a good conſcience, or that labour under the torments of a wounded ſpirit. Let the ſorrowful ſighing of the afflicted come before thee, and deliver them in thy good time out of all their troubles.

Let every one of my friends and relations, O God, be of the number of thoſe whom thou loveſt and delighteſt in. Defend them from the evils and temptations of this world, and grant them whatever thou ſeeſt needful both for their ſouls and bodies.

To theſe my prayers and interceſſions, I deſire to add my unfeigned praiſes for all thy bleſſings, ſpiritual and temporal. I bleſs thee more particularly for the mercies of the day paſt; for preſerving me in health and ſafety; and delivering me from the evils which I have moſt juſtly deſerved.

Give me grace to make a right uſe and improvement of all thy mercies; and vouchſafe, O Lord, to continue to me thy gracious favour and protection. Be thou pleaſed of thy great goodneſs to take me, [and my dear wife and children] and all that belong to me, this night, under the care of thy good providence. Defend us from all perils and dangers; and after the comfortable refreſhments of reſt and ſleep, raiſe us up

in health and ſafety, with hearts full of love to thee and zeal to thy ſervice, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord, in the fulleſt ſenſe of whoſe words I pray to be heard;

Our Father, &c.

PRAYERS for young Perſons and Servants.

A Prayer for a Child, to be uſed Morning and Evening.

O LORD, my moſt loving Saviour and merciful Redeemer, who commandeſt that little children ſhould come unto thee, and didſt take them up in thine arms, lay thy hands upon, and bleſs them; look graciouſly upon me, who am one of thy children devoted to thy ſervice. Have compaſſion on the weakneſs of my tender years, and keep me from all evil and danger both in body and ſoul; make me always mindful of my creator in the days of my youth, and of that baptiſmal vow that was made in my name, that I ſhould forſake the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and all the ſinful luſts of the fleſh. Make me dutiful to my parents, loving to my relations, obedient to my governors and inſtructors, and courteous and humble to all, that as I grow in years, I may grow in grace and wiſdom, and be in favour with God and man. Guide and ſanctify me by thy holy Spirit, that the longer I live, the better I may be, to the comfort of my parents, the honour and glory of thee my God, and

and my own happineſs both here and hereafter; and this I beg, for the ſake of Jeſus Chriſt. *Amen.* *Our Father*, &c.

A Morning Prayer for a young Perſon.

O Eternal God and heavenly Father, thou art the kind author of our being; be thou the gracious guide of my life: my age is ſimple and unexperienced; O be thou pleaſed to inſpire me with true wiſdom from above, that it may guide and direct me in all my ways. I am come into a world full of ſnares and temptations, O do thou fill me with the knowledge and love of thy truth, that it may keep me from the ways that lead to deſtruction.

I render thee unfeigned thanks for all the bleſſings I daily receive from thee, and for thy particular preſervation and refreſhment of me this night paſt.

O Lord, have thou mercy upon me, and forgive me all my ſins; and give me grace to flee all youthful luſts, and to remember thee my creator in the days of my youth.

O poſſeſs my heart with the fear of thee, and a dependance upon thee. Let me always walk as in thy preſence, conſidering I muſt one day die (I know not how ſoon) and render an account of all the actions of my life. Poſſeſs alſo my heart, O my God, with that natural tenderneſs for my parents, and thoſe that have the care of me, and with that chriſtian ſenſe of my duty towards them, that my language may be reſpectful, my actions dutiful, and my whole behaviour ſuch that I may not increaſe the burthen and

care of their life, but prove a comfort and bleſſing to them.

Bleſs me, O Lord, in my learning, and deliver me from ſloth and idleneſs, and ill company, and from all dangers both of body and ſoul, and help me daily to increaſe in knowledge, and wiſdom, and all virtue.

I commend to thy divine providence, [my father and mother, my brethren and ſiſters] all my friends and relations, and all this family, and all mankind: vouchſafe us, O gracious God, all thoſe graces and bleſſings which thou knoweſt to be moſt needful for us.

Unto thee, O my God, do I dedicate my ſoul and body, beſeeching thee to take them into thy care and protection, that they may be always employed in thy ſervice, and to thy glory; that having ſerved thee faithfully in this life, I may at laſt obtain life everlaſting, through the merits and mediation of my bleſſed ſaviour and redeemer Jeſus Chriſt our Lord; in whoſe holy name and words I ſum up my own, and the wants of all mankind. *Our Father*, &c.

An Evening Prayer for a young Perſon.

O Almighty God, and merciful Father, who willingly heareſt the prayers of all thoſe that call upon thee faithfully; I humbly beſeech thee to pardon whatſoever thou haſt ſeen amiſs in me this day, in my thoughts, words, or actions. [Here mention particulars] Aſſiſt me, O God, in making it my conſtant endeavour to reſiſt and conquer every evil inclination within me, and every temptation from without.

Help

Help me daily to increaſe in the knowledge and love of thee my God, and of my ſaviour Jeſus Chriſt.

Shew me the way in which I ſhould walk, whilſt I am young; and grant I may never part from it.

Bleſs to me, I pray thee, whatſoever good inſtructions have at any time been given me; help me carefully to remember them, and ſeriouſly to practiſe them; that I may be ever growing in knowledge, in wiſdom, and in goodneſs.

Bleſs and defend our moſt gracious ſovereign Lord the King, and all the royal family; and all orders of men, among us, from the higheſt to the loweſt: Lord, give them all grace in their ſeveral ſtations, to be inſtrumental to thy glory, and the publick good.

Accept, O Lord, of my humbleſt praiſe and thankſgiving for all the goodneſs thou haſt this day, or at any time, ſhewed me; for all the helps of preventing or reſtraining grace thou haſt vouchſafed me; for whatever I have done, which is in any meaſure acceptable to thee; for whatever progreſs I have made in learning; for thy preſervation of me from all the miſeries and dangers which frail mortality is every moment expoſed to; particularly for----[Here mention any particular mercy.]

I humbly commit my ſoul and body to thy care this night, begging thy gracious protection and bleſſing.

And all theſe mercies and bleſſings which I aſk for myſelf, I heartily deſire for all my relations and friends, and for all mankind. Let it

pleaſe thee to guide us all in this preſent life, and to conduct us ſafe to thy heavenly kingdom, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord and Saviour; in whoſe moſt holy name and words, I conclude theſe my imperfect prayers.

Our Father, &c.

A Prayer for Scholars before Study.

O Incomprehenſible creator, the true fountain of light, and only author of all knowledge; who out of the treaſure of thy wiſdom haſt with wonderful harmony diſpoſed and ordered all the parts of the world; vouchſafe, I beſeech thee, to enlighten my underſtanding with the rays of thy brightneſs, and drive from me all darkneſs of ſin and Ignorance. Thou, who makeſt eloquent the tongues of thoſe that want utterance, inſtruct my tongue, and pour on my lips the grace of thy bleſſing. Give me a diligent and obedient ſpirit, quickneſs of apprehending, capacity of retaining, and the continual aſſiſtance of thy holy grace, that I may apply all to thy honour, and the everlaſting ſalvation of my own ſoul, through Chriſt our Lord. *Amen.*

The bleſſing of God the Father, the grace of Jeſus Chriſt our Lord, and the comfort of the Holy Ghoſt, be with us, and dwell in our hearts for ever. *Amen.*

A Morning Prayer for a Servant.

O LORD my God, the great creator and preſerver of all mankind; I bleſs and praiſe thy holy name for all thy mercies to my ſoul and body: thou haſt given me another day,

O

O give me grace to ſpend it to thy honour and glory: enable me to work in it the work for which thou haſt ſent me into the world, before the night of death cometh, wherein I cannot work; that I may not increaſe the number of my tranſgreſſions, by running heedleſly or knowingly into the commiſſion of any ſin.

O God, the witneſs of all my actions, and judge of all my thoughts and affections; what would become of me, if thou ſhould'ſt enter into ſtrict judgment with me? How ſhould I ſtand before thy tribunal, covered with guilt and ſhame of my ſin? Lord, I repent, increaſe thou my repentance; I repent of----[Here mention thoſe ſins which moſt burden thy conſcience.] O be thou reconciled unto me, and pardon me, for the ſake of Jeſus Chriſt; and not only pardon my ſins, but deliver me from the power and dominion of them.

I am conſcious to myſelf of great weakneſs and frailty; O do thou confirm and ſtrengthen me; create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right ſpirit within me: Give me a true faith, and influence my heart with a holy love; that I may delight in thy commandments; that I may walk before thee in uprightneſs and fear, in faithfulneſs and honeſty; conſtantly and chearfully depending upon thee; and doing the duty of my place, not with eye ſervice, but with ſingleneſs of heart, as knowing that I ſhall be accountable to thee at the laſt day, as well for theſe duties which I owe my maſter and miſtreſs, as for thoſe which are more immediately to be paid to thee.

O Lord, I beſeech thee, keep me from all opprobrious and reproachful language; from all lying and ſlandering; and from all unjuſt and deceitful actions. Make me always thankful, humble, and contented, neither withholding from thee the praiſe due to thy infinite bounty and mercy; nor from man the thanks due to him, for any act of kindneſs or charity towards me. Help me O my God, ſo to walk before thee, that my ſoul may enjoy a true liberty; that my life may be full of comfort, my death of peace; and that I may obtain eternal glory, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.

Bleſs this whole family to which I belong; ſow in all our hearts the ſeeds of unfeigned charity, that we may all enjoy the comforts of a mutual affection, and of a mutual aſſiſtance and aid in our ſeveral places.

Poſſeſs us with a juſt ſenſe of duty towards thee, and towards man; that we may be living members of thy bleſſed ſon; and grant, that being protected by thy good providence, directed by thy word, and aſſiſted by the influence of thy holy Spirit, we may meet in the family of heaven, where we ſhall adore and praiſe thee, love and enjoy thee to all eternity, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord; in whoſe moſt holy name and words, I continue to pray. *Our Father*, &c.

An Evening Prayer for a Servant.

O MY God, my ſtrength, and the rock of my ſalvation, how does my ſoul praiſe thee, for thy great goodneſs, and all the precious promiſes of thy goſpel!

But,

But, O my God, I have forgotten thee, though thou haſt given me my being; I have forgotten thee, though thou gaveſt thine own ſon to redeem me; not only to free me from the puniſhment due to my ſins, but from ſlavery and dominion of them, and to procure for me life eternal.

I have feared the diſpleaſure of man, whoſe breath is in his noſtrils, more than I have feared thine.

O thou juſt and holy judge of mankind! I have been more ſollicitous for the bread that periſhes, than for thy favour, which is better than life itſelf.

I have ſinned againſt my knowledge, thy word, and the motions of thy holy Spirit. I have been apt to repine and murmur at thy providence, and to be diſcontented with my condition. [Here mention thy particular ſins.]

But I repent, O my God, of all my ſins, and humbly beg the aſſiſtance of thy grace, that I may do works meet for repentance, and ſerve thee in truth, and with an upright heart, all the days of my life.

Have mercy upon me, O Lord, have mercy upon me, and forgive me all my offences; and give me grace to keep upon my watch and guard againſt them. Enable me ſincerely to endeavour to reform and amend my life, that I may every day grow and increaſe in goodneſs, and be ſo much the fitter for death the nearer I approach to it: and whenever it comes, let it find me, O Lord, in a diſpoſition and frame of ſpirit fit to die: having an unſhaken faith, an humble reſignation

and

and ſubmiſſion, an holy contempt of earth and a devout love of heaven.

Thou haſt called me to be a ſervant, but thou haſt called me to be an heir of eternal life; O give me grace to be contented, and faithfully to diſcharge my duty.

Do thou, who never ſlumbereſt nor ſleepeſt, watch over me, and this whole family; let thine angels pitch their tents about us this night; let our ſleep be ſweet and refreſhing to us, for Jeſus Chriſt his ſake; in whoſe moſt holy name and words, I beg all things needful both for myſelf, and all mankind; particularly all that I am in any way bound to pray for. *Our Father, &c.*

Though theſe prayers are all that are particularly provided for the uſe of ſervants; yet it is hoped, they will not look upon themſelves excuſed from uſing others; but that when they have leiſure and opportunity, they will make uſe of ſome of the morning and evening prayers for private perſons, as well as ſome of the other prayers, in the laſt part of this collection.

A Grace before Meat.

BLESS, O Lord, unto us, the uſe of theſe thy creatures; make us to receive them ſoberly and thankfully, and in the ſtrength of them that ſerve thee faithfully, through Jeſus Chriſt. *Amen.*

A Grace after Meat.

O God who haſt created us by thy power, preſerved us by thy providence, redeemed us by thy blood, and at this time fed us with thy good creatures, thy holy name be bleſſed and praiſed now and evermore. *Amen.*

The END *of* PART I.

Part 2d

INSTRUCTIONS

FOR

MEDITATION

OR MENTAL

PRAYER.

BRITISH MUSEUM

MEDITATION conſiſting of conſiderations on the great truths of chriſtianity, pious affections and manifold elevations of the ſoul to God, and ſerious reſolutions of devoting one's ſelf to him, is allowed to be one of the moſt important exerciſes of a chriſtian life, and ſuch as ought to be performed daily, by as many as would ſerve God in good earneſt. The time moſt proper for it is in the morning. The moſt proper place one's cloſet, or what other place one can be moſt recollected in. The chief ſubjects to be meditated on, eſpecially for beginners are, the end for which we came into this world: the benefit of God, and the many motives we have to love and ſerve him: the vanity of the honours, riches, and pleaſures of this life; and how very ſuddenly all theſe things vaniſh away: the enormity of ſin, and the multitude of our own ſins in particular: the certainty of death; and the neceſſity of preparing for it: the account that we muſt one day give of our whole lives to an all-ſeeing judge: the eternal joys of heaven, and the eternal torments of hell: the preſence and majeſty of God: the life and death of Jeſus Chriſt: the examples of his ſaints: the ſtate of our own interior, in order to the knowledge of ourſelves, our paſſions and our vices, &c.

The method of meditation is as follows: firſt, place yourſelf in the preſence of God, by a lively faith that he ſees and beholds you, and is moſt intimately preſent in the very centre of your ſoul; proſtrate yourſelf in ſpirit before him, to adore this ſovereign Lord, whoſe majeſty fills heaven and earth; make an offering of your whole behaviour to him; and humbly beg his pardon for all your paſt treaſons and ſins.

Secondly, Implore with fervour and humility his light and grace, that you may perform this important exerciſe as you ought.

Thirdly, Conſider attentively upon the ſubject which you have choſen for your meditation (which you ought to have prepared over night) and let the truths of heaven ſink deep into your ſoul. Dwell moſt upon ſuch points as you find yourſelf moſt affected with.

Fourthly, From theſe conſiderations draw pious affections of the love of God, of gratitude for his benefits, repentance for your ſins, and the like, which are the principal parts of mental prayer, and what you ought moſt to inſiſt upon.

Fifthly, From theſe affections paſs on to good reſolutions of a ſerious amendment of your life, particularly with regard to ſuch failings as you are moſt ſubject to: and determine with yourſelf to begin that very day to put theſe good purpoſes in execution on ſuch occaſions as ſhall offer.

Sixthly, Conclude by thankſgiving to God for the affections and reſolutions he has given you; offer them to him, and beg his bleſſing on them.

Seventhly, Lay up in your mind ſuch points of your meditation as have touched you moſt, and oftentimes in the day reflect upon them.

Eighthly, Such as find difficulty in meditation may help themſelves by uſing ſome good book, reading leiſurely, and pauſing upon what they read, and drawing proper affections and reſolutions from it.

MEDI-

MEDITATION I.

Of Sins.

1. CONſider how that thy ſoul was made by God, moſt noble and moſt beautiful: but thou by living wickedly and careleſly, has moſt diſhonourably defiled it, and made it vile, ſordid, and abominable. For the deformity of ſin is greater than any viſible deformity.

And indeed, ſo great is the enormity of a ſinful courſe of life, which deſerves eternal damnation, that by right we ought to humble ourſelves for it all our days to the very duſt, even beneath brute beaſts.

2. Thou waſt made to this end, that thou ſhouldſt exhibit obſervance and reverence to thy moſt high, moſt worthy, and moſt bountiful creator, and that thou ſhouldſt love and praiſe him: but by ſinning thou haſt averted thyſelf from him, and converted thyſelf to the love of vain and periſhable creatures, and ſo haſt made thyſelf unworthy of his favour, and worthy of eternal puniſhments.

Wherefore deſervedly thou ſhould ſtrive to bewail thyſelf, and lament the evils by which thou haſt offended thy Lord God, with both inward and outward tears.

3. Wherefore call to mind, as well as thou canſt, in the bitterneſs of thy ſoul, all thy more grievous ſins, which thou haſt committed from thy childhood, to this very moment, by works, words, and thoughts.

Not-

Notwithſtanding, thou muſt not ſtay long upon the ſins of the fleſh, which thou haſt committed, leaſt ſuch an imagination breed in thee ſome harmful delight.

Run over diligently year after year, or day after day, or time after time. Call to mind the places in which thou waſt; the perſons with whom thou livedſt; and the ſtate and office which thou hadſt. Ponder how often thou haſt repeated thy wicked ways.

Paint to thyſelf, as it were, a ſtriking portrait of all thy ſins, that, as often as thou ſhalt view it, thou mayeſt eaſily ſee the crimes and wickedneſſes of thy former life; and mayeſt therefore bluſh, be contrite, and humbled.

4. Exaggerate and agravate thy ſins, by which thou, a deſpicable and vile man, haſt diſhonoured the Creator of heaven and earth, and Lord of higheſt majeſty, and haſt done him an infinite affront; and after a certain manner haſt crucified Chriſt again: who, notwithſtanding, has always moſt bountifully done thee good, and preſerved thee.

Pondering well this thy pride, perverſneſs, and ingratitude; humble, caſt down, and put thyſelf beneath all the men in the world; yea beneath all creatures, eſteeming thyſelf the vileſt of all, and unworthy, whom the earth ſhould ſuſtain, but worthy whom hell ſhould ſwallow up, unleſs the mercy of God interpoſed.

5. Ponder how much God deteſts and puniſhes ſins, ſo that by his terrible and juſt judgment, he has damned eternally very many, for one ſingle ſin; as is manifeſt in Lucifer, and in the angels

angels that conſented to him. It is manifeſt alſo, how much God was offended by one only tranſgreſſion, which our firſt parents Adam and Eve committed.

Now, what ought to have been done with thee, who haſt ſo often offended the moſt holy king of glory? deeply conſidering theſe things, accuſe and judge thyſelf, leaſt afterwards thou be judged by our Lord.

Admire greatly, that all the elements, and all creatures have not riſen up againſt thee, to revenge upon thee the injury of their maker. Be aſtoniſhed, that the earth has not opened itſelf, to ſwallow thee up alive, and has not tranſmitted thee into hell.

6. Finally, grieving with thy very ſoul, or deſiring to have grief, and eyeing attentively Jeſus crucified, and his bloody wounds, cry out from thy heart, and ſay theſe, or ſuch like words; Alas! O moſt pitiful Lord Jeſus Chriſt, my creator, redeemer, and benefactor, I moſt unhappy, have ſo and ſo offended thee, and contemned thee; thoſe and thoſe iniquities I have ſo often repeated; I have been ſo diſobedient and ungrateful unto thee. But pardon me, I beſeech thee, for thy immenſe goodneſs and charity with which thou didſt ſuſtain for me thy moſt bitter paſſion.

When thou ſhalt with humility have ſaid theſe or ſuch like words, by no means deſpair, but reſuming a full and amorous confidence in God, purpoſe firmly by his grace, to mend thyſelf, and to avoid, as much as ſhall be in thy power, all ſin for the future.

ME-

MEDITATION II.

Of Death.

1. TO think of death beforehand, and diligently to prepare ones ſelf for it, is true wiſdom. And thou ſhalt be happy, if always, and every where expecting the hour of death; thou ſhalt ſo watch, as thou permitteſt nothing to reſide in thy conſcience, which might cauſe thee anxiouſly to fear, although thou waſt juſt now to dye.

It ſhall be well with thee, if conſidering how vile thy fleſh ſhall be, thou art not proud; nor doſt not follow carnal delights. For, how miſerable, I pray thee, is thy fleſh in this life! how frail! how full of filth, which continually flows with an intollerable ſtench through all its paſſages, though outwardly it appear fair and neat! ſo that thy body at preſent may rightly be called dung-hill and all kind of filth; but ſhortly it ſhall be an abject, corrupted, and putrid carcaſs, and worms meat.

2. Think therefore that thou muſt ſhortly dye, yea, perhaps to day, and muſt go hence, into another unknown region, and muſt leave here riches, glory, honours, pleaſures, friends, vanities, and all other tranſitory and periſhable things, which thou inordinately loveſt, or in which thou art now delighted.

And indeed every day, every hour, and every moment, thou approacheſt near thy death, and the laſt hour of thy life. Therefore compoſe thyſelf as if thou waſt now to dye. Think thy coun-

countenance to wax pale, thy mouth to be contracted, thy ſight to be darkened, thy breath to fail, and the ſweat of death to be now preſent; which teſtifies nature to be overcome.

3. Think, I pray thee, how great a trembling and horror will then ſeize thee, and how much thou wilt grieve, if thou ſhalt be unprovided, becauſe thou haſt not vigorouſly mended thyſelf.

O how ſhort will the time of thy life ſeem to thee? for it will appear like a dream, and a ſhadow: when thou ſhalt reflect that eternity is at hand which ſhall never end.

Perhaps thou wilt deſire one little hour to correct thyſelf, but it is uncertain thou ſhalt obtain it.

What will thy pride profit thee? what will it profit thee, if thou ſhalt now have followed thy own will, and the vicious paſſions of thy mind.

O how ſad wilt thou be, when thou ſhalt have loſt thy precious time, or ſpent it unprofitably! how wilt thou be vext that thou haſt lived ſo wickedly, negligently and remiſsly! that thou waſt ſo greedy to ſee, hear, and talk vain things! that thou haſt not more manfully contemned the allurements of thy fleſh and ſenſes, that thou haſt been ſo ſlack to the mortification of thyſelf; and to follow true humility and charity, and to gather together all ſpiritual good things!

Now therefore whilſt thou haſt yet time amend thyſelf and ſtudy to live better, and more holily.

4. Think, when thy ſoul, galled with the ſharp prickings of death, ſhall ceaſe to ſee the light of this world, and ſhall begin with its inward eyes to behold the ſtate of the other life, and thoſe things which before it would not believe:

lieve: horrible troops of devils will preſent themſelves, endeavouring to enſnare thy ſoul, and expecting to make a prey of it, if it ſhall have departed hence without true repentance. It is therefore good and healthful to ſalvation, now to provide for one's ſelf, to cut off bad and unprofitable deſires; to leave vain and worldly things, and convert one's ſelf wholly to love and ſeek after celeſtial and eternal goods.

5. Conſider that how thy ſoul being gone out of thy body, it ſhall immediately be preſented before the tribunal of a terrible judge, who cannot judge thee otherwiſe than thy works deſerve, ſeeing that he is the ſupreme and immutable juſtice.

In this particular judgment thou muſt render a moſt exact account of thy whole life, of all thy time ſpent unprofitably, of all thy bad works, of all the good thou haſt omitted, of all thy idle words, and of all thy thoughts and inordinate affections.

The devils will confront thee with all thy ſins, and all thy negligences which have not been blotted out by repentance.

Finally, a ſentence ſhall be pronounced by the juſt judge, concerning thy ſoul, which ſhall never be recalled for all eternity: for where the tree ſhall fall, whether towards the ſouth, or towards the north, there it ſhall for ever remain; and ſhall belong either to eternal ſalvation or damnation.

6. It is profitable for thee often to think on theſe things, that thou mayeſt with diligence correct thy life, and make thy peace with God, before

before thou ſhalt be called hence. This thou wilt if thou be wiſe.

For our Lord God is very merciful, and receives moſt courteouſly all thoſe who timely return unto him by true repentance: becauſe he wills not the death of a ſinner, but rather that the ſinner ſhould be converted and live.

MEDITATION III.

Of the Univerſal and laſt Judgment.

1. NOthing can be imagined more dreadful, than that ſtrict and terrible judgment, by which God will judge all men in the laſt day.

Very terrible ſigns ſhall precede this univerſal judgment, as a ſtupendous violence of winds, tumultuous riſings of the ſea, unuſual workings of its waves, vaſt earthquakes, falls of buildings, daſhing together of mountains, rending of rocks, claps of thunder, obſcuration of the ſun, and moon, and ſtars; diſmal roaring and bellowing of beaſts, miſerable withering of men for fear, *&c.*

The day of judgment, being now at hand the world ſhall be ſet on fire by the divine power, and ſo the fire ſhall deſtroy and conſume all brute animals, and all men, whom it ſhall find alive.

But the ſupreme judge will come in his majeſty, and with intolerable anger. That dreadful judge ſhall come in the clouds of heaven, with the elders of the people, and with thouſands of angels, and the whole celeſtial hoſt.

Deſervedly therefore the prophet Zephaniah conſidering that great bitter day of our Lord, ſays, "That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble

trouble and diſtreſs, a day of waſteneſs and deſolation, a day of darkneſs and gloomineſs, a day of clouds and thick darkneſs, a day of the trumpet and alarm."

And St. Jerom, ſays, " whether I eat or drink, or whatſoever elſe I do, the noiſe of that dreadful trumpet always ſounds in the ears of my mind, ariſe ye dead come to judgment."

2. Then all men in a moment, having received their bodies ſhall riſe again, and our Lord ſhall come to judge them.

And the elect indeed agile, beautiful, ſtrong, ſplendid, joyous, and ſecure, ſhall meet the judge; and being raiſed from earth, ſhall ſtand in the air on his right hand: But the reprobate ſhall ſtand upon the earth, heavier than lead, infirm, deformed, ſtinking, vile, obſcure, and miſerably trembling, and ſhall be on his left hand.

O! what horrid and unimaginable ſtraits ſhall they labour under! with how unuterable a terror and fear ſhall they be ſtruck, when they ſhall ſee above them, an angry and inflexible judge, beneath them Hell gaping for them; about them the world on fire, beſide them a multitude of devils, accuſing them, and within them a guilty and gnawing conſcience.

All their ſins, and all the ſecrets of their hearts ſhall be manifeſt as well to men as angels. The wicked ſhall ſeek to turn away their face from the angry countenance of the judge, but ſhall not be able.

They alſo beholding the glory of the juſt, ſhall be troubled with a horrid fear, and ſighing for anguiſh of ſpirit, ſhall ſay, theſe are they whom

whom ſometimes we had in deriſion; we fools deemed their life madneſs, and their end without honour. Lo! how they are reckoned amongſt the Sons of God and their lot is amongſt the ſaints.

3. Chriſt our Lord will ſhew to all his wounds ſhining with ineffable ſplendor, which truly ſhall bring to the juſt a moſt ſweet conſolation, but to the wicked dreadful confuſion.

Chriſt himſelf ſhall then terribly upbraid all the reprobate and ungrateful, with the benefits of his incarnation and paſſion: and they with inconceivable grief ſhall acknowledge him, whom they choſe rather to ſlight and deſpiſe, than to fear and worſhip.

4. No evil ſhall then remain undiſcuſſed or unrevenged; but a ſtrict examination ſhall be made of all thy works, words, thoughts, and affections.

The juſtice of the judge is not leſs than his mercy; both are infinite. Wherefore thou muſt render an account of all the time granted to thee, of ſpiritual gifts neglected, of temporal goods ill expended, of meat, drink, and alms, unworthily conſumed.

Thou ſhalt render an account, not only for thyſelf, but alſo for thoſe, to whom thou haſt at any time ſet a bad example, and haſt given an occaſion of doing ill.

As alſo for all ſinners and pagans, perhaps a grievous account ſhall be exacted of thee, for that thou haſt not faithfully prayed for their converſion.

But chiefly thou ſhalt give an account for thoſe who were ſpecially committed to thy care.

Innumerable ſins which thou doſt not take notice of, nor acknowledge, ſhall then break out againſt thee, as it were, out of ambuſh, and ſhall be objected unto thee.

The leaſt thoughts, and very minute words, which thou ſlighted, and reputed as nothing, ſhall then be diſcuſſed. Hence the pſalmiſt prays, from my hidden faults cleanſe me O Lord.

Attend now that moſt hard and irrevocable ſentence of the juſt and angry judge. For when he ſhall have ſaid to thoſe who ſhall be on his right hand, come ye bleſſed of my Father, *&c.* He ſhall ſay to thoſe who ſhall be on his left hand, go ye curſed into eternal fire. O ſharp word! O word full of all horror and bitterneſs!

This ſentence of eternal damnation being pronounced, immediately the earth with a terrible crack, ſhall ſwallow up the wicked; and that fire with which the world ſhall burn, involving them in darkneſs, and with all the filth and ſtench of the whole world, ſhall thruſt them into hell, there to be for ever tormented.

But whilſt they are falling down into the depth of hell, the elect ſhall go up glorioufly into heaven, the ſame reprobate beholding them, and, to their greater calamity and miſery never forgetting their glory. O deſpiſers of the law of God! I beſeech you, how ſharp it will be, to be in this manner ſeparated from the ſociety of God, and all the citizens of heaven.

6. Thou therefore, that thou mayeſt be able to avoid this inexpreſſible miſery, confuſion, and horror,

horror, whilſt the time of mercy laſts, ſtudy to appeaſe God and to pleaſe him.

Correct thy life with all thy ſtrength and might. Depart from evil and do good. Spend thy time profitably: fly vain and fooliſh joys: mortify as much as thou canſt, the vicious paſſions and affections of thy mind. Now wiſely fear, that thou mayſt be then happily ſecure.

MEDITATION IV.

On the Pains of Hell.

1. AS the happineſs of the ſaints in heaven is unutterable, ſo the calamity of the reprobate in hell, is ineffable and incomprehenſible.

Do thou now imagine a place under ground, and a horrible gulph: behold a vaſt furnace, all on fire with ſulphur and pitch, terribly burning, dark, ſmoaking, ſtinking; full of men, and devils.

There, is everlaſting horror, and never ending deſpair; there, is gnaſhing of teeth, and great howling, and perpetual blaſpheming; there, the damned, for the ſharpneſs of their pains bite their tongues, and curſe the king of heaven.

2. Conſider that there is ſuch intenſe fire and heat, and ſuch cold, as all fire and heat, and all cold of this world, in compariſon of that heat and cold, are nothing, and there they are forced to paſs from intolerable heat, to intolerable cold. They feel moſt bitter torments in every ſenſe and in every member: their ſight continually beholds dreadful and horrid faces of devils. Their hearing continually perceives the lamen-

tations and ſad cries of thoſe who continually cry out, "Wo, wo, wo! why were we created and made, curſed be God that made us." This is the ſad ſong which is there continually ſung. There every one is puniſhed moſt in thoſe members by which he has moſt ſinned.

3. The devils inſult over thoſe they torment, and whom they have, and ſhall for ever have for their companions, ſaying; "Where are now your riches, where your honours, where your glory, where your pleaſure, where your delights, where your vanities?"

Who is ſo hard and mad, as not to conceive a profitable fear from the conſideration of theſe things? And, not to amend his wicked and negligent life?

Aſſuredly whatever can torment, whatever can cauſe horror and abomination, ſhall for ever be ſeen, heard, and felt in hell.

4. Conſider, beſides, the inward puniſhment of the damned; for they ſhall be for all eternity deprived of the ſight of God. They ſhall never ſee that bleſſed city, the celeſtial Jeruſalem.

God has caſt them away, and they are delivered to everlaſting oblivion; nor will he ever have mercy on them, (Rom. 1.) for they are veſſels of wrath, in which the rigor and the ſeverity of the divine juſtice are manifeſted.

The worm of their conſcience ſhall never dye, but ſhall without ceaſing gnaw and accuſe them, as that for ſo ſhort a joy, and ſo momentary a pleaſure, they have loſt eternal happineſs, and found everlaſting puniſhments.

O ponder! ponder diligently this eternity of pains. After a thouſand thouſands of years their end ſhall be no nearer, becauſe they ſhall never end; but in hell there ſhall be a perpetual preſence of all evils, and a perpetual abſence of all comfort.

5. Lo ſuch a calamity is the reward of thoſe who fear not God, and continue in their ſins without true repentance, until their departure out of this life! in ſuch a ſtate there is ſo much enormity, by reaſon of the contempt of the immenſe God; that if it be not blotted out by repentance, it will be puniſhed with endleſs pain.

But thou who art yet in the time of grace, leaving thy vices and vanities, without delay return to the Lord thy God, and he will receive, cleanſe and heal thee. Fear him, ſerve him, love him with all thy heart. For ſo thou ſhalt eſcape thoſe torments, which never are ended, never intermitted, never diminiſhed.

6. Thou muſt with all thy might tend to perfection, thou muſt lead an humble, pure and holy life, and if thou art wiſe, thou wilt take all poſſible care for the ſalvation of thy ſoul.

MEDITATION V.

On the Life and Paſſion of Chriſt.

1. THE ſin of the world could not have been taken away, unleſs the creator of the world aſſuming human fleſh, had aboliſhed it with his own blood. Ponder therefore, how our Lord Jeſus the ſon of the living God, the moſt high God, for the exceſſive love, with

which he loved us, would be conceived by the Holy Ghoſt, and made man in the womb of the Virgin Mary: that thou loaded with thine iniquities mighteſt not deſcend into hell.

Thy God was made thy brother. He was born a tender little infant, in a poor ſtable. He was wrapt in vile clouts. He was laid in a crib of beaſts. He lay upon hay and ſtraw. He was ſuckled by the breaſts of a very poor mother.

He was circumciſed the eighth day from his nativity, and ſhed his blood.

Then he fled into Egypt.

And ſo in his ſacred infancy, and childhood he ſuſtained very many neceſſities, and grievances, with Mary and Joſeph.

2. The ſweet Jeſus when he was about thirty years old, humbly received baptiſm from his ſervant John.

He faſted, was tempted, watched, preached, was wearied with journeys and labours.

He endured with a moſt meek heart, three and thirty years, hunger, thirſt, cold, heat, and innumerable griveances, and perſecutions; and at length went to Jeruſalem there to die for thee.

3. The ſweet Jeſus, when upon his knees, he had humbly waſhed the feet of his diſciples, had inſtituted for thy ſanctification and comfort the participation of the heavenly manna. He went unto mount Olivet, and there, O what grievous, what unworthy, and what ſharp things did he ſuffer for thee!

For he the Lord of higheſt majeſty, would tremble and be ſad even unto death. He would be bathed in a ſweat of blood, by reaſon of the vehemency

vehemency of the anguiſh, with which he was oppreſſed.

He refuſed not to be kiſſed by the traytor Judas, and as a thief by wicked men, to be ignominiouſly apprehended, bound, led away, dragged, puſhed, ſmitten.

4. The ſweet Jeſus, the Lord of Lords, vouchſafed to receive a cruel buffet from a ſervant of the high prieſt.

He vouchſafed to be unjuſtly condemned, to be defiled with ſpittle, to be beaten with blows, and buffets, to be reproachfully blindfolded, mocked, and ſcoffed at.

The moſt meek lamb, did not in the mean while complain, nor turn away his face, from thoſe who ſpate on him: but teaching us patience, and exhibiting himſelf a pattern of patience, he was dumb and opened not his mouth. He endured with ſilence revilings, contumelies, diſgraces and many injuries.

5. Behold the ſweet Jeſus, the Holy of Holies, beſpattered with ſpittle and bound, is led to Pilate, and before him falſely accuſed, but he humbly holds his peace.

He is ſent by Pilate to Herod, and is deſpiſed by Herod, and clothed in a white and ridiculous coat as a fool, and ſo is ſent back to Pilate.

He is ſtripped in the porters hall, and inhumanly tied to a pillar, and moſt cruelly torn with whips. His virginal and delicate fleſh was all deformed with bruiſes and wounds, and out of it ran on all ſides down upon the earth rivulets of his precious blood.

O what, and how ſad a ſpectacle was this! truly he was wounded for our iniquities, he was bruiſed for our wickedneſs, and by his bruiſes we were healed.

6. The ſweet Jeſus, King of Kings, is clothed in a purple cloak, and to his greater reproach is crowned with thorns, and wounded.

A reed is put in his hand, and he is ſcoffingly ſaluted and adored; he is ſmitten with a reed, again he is ſpit upon, and buffeted.

He is expoſed to be gazed upon by the people, with a crown of thorns upon his head, and a purple robe about his ſhoulders.

7. The ſweet Jeſus, creator of heaven and earth, carries his own croſs upon his bruiſed and hurt ſhoulders.

He taſtes upon mount Calvary wine mixed with myrrhe and gall.

Again he is ſtripped, and his wounds are laid open by the pulling off of his garments.

He is unmercifully ſtretched out on the croſs, and his delicate hands, and undefiled feet are transfixed with hard nails, and the joints of his moſt holy limbs are moſt miſerable looſed.

Moſt pure blood flows abundantly out of his ſacred wounds, as out of ſo many fountains.

Go to, ponder, and meditate profoundly thoſe things. Take notice of the bloody and ſaving wounds of thy redeemer, ſalute and venerate them with a devout heart.

8. The ſweet Jeſus endured moſt bitter torments three hours, hanging on the tree of the croſs between two thieves.

Lo he is mocked and blaſphemed! but he prays for his blaſphemers, he prays for his crucifiers, he deeply compaſſionates his ſorrowful and afflicted mother ſtanding by, and courteouſly ſpeaks to her.

Burning with a moſt grievous thirſt, vinegar is given him to drink.

And forthwith bowing his venerable head he gives up the ghoſt. The good paſtor lays down his life for his ſheep. He who gives life to all things dies for thee.

Afterwards his ſide is opened with a ſpear, and thence flow out blood and water.

Laſt of all, his immaculate body being taken down from the croſs, is laid in a tomb, and buried.

9. Thou haſt here a great ſubject to meditate upon.

See thou lay it up diligently in the receſſes of thy ſoul.

But whilſt thou pondereſt theſe things behold with thy inward eyes thy beloved Jeſus Chriſt, not as a pure man, but contemplate him as God and man in all things which he did and ſuffered.

Conſider diligently his deep humility and patience, his ineſtimable bounty, and moſt ardent charity. Admire! be amazed, imitate, compaſſionate him, and return love for love as thou art able.

Adore, praiſe and glorify him, and give him thanks.

Conſider, I beſeech thee, whether it be fitting, that the ſon of the moſt high, the ſupreme king of glory, enduring for thee a vile caitiff, ſo great abjection and ignominy, and ſuch great

labours and torments, thou in the mean time, as if thou waſt ſecure, ſhouldſt give thyſelf to ſports, and jeſts, to vanities and delights; little or nothing thinking of him, and living negligently, nay perhaps wickedly: O! how ill at the laſt ſhall it go with thoſe ungrateful and unhappy hearts, who little eſteem ſuch great benefits, ſuch teſtimonies of love, and care not to ruminate on the paſſion of Chriſt! far be it from thee.

MEDITATION VI.

On the Imitation of Chriſt.

1. LO, the cruel, baſe and horrible prince of darkneſs, the devil ſays to thee, hear and follow me, be proud: and neglecting God do thy own will, love the world, and thoſe things which are in the world, that thou mayeſt be tormented with me in the horrible puniſhments of hell.

On the contrary, the mild, gracious, and amiable king of glory Chriſt, ſays to thee; hear, and follow me; be humble, and deſpiſing the world, deny thy own will. Love God, and thoſe things which are above, that thou mayſt rejoyce with me for ever in heaven.

Here now inquire and weigh diligently with thyſelf, which of the two, thou oughteſt to hear and follow. Aſſuredly thy reaſon manifeſtly cries, and ſhews, that thou oughteſt to follow the Lord Jeſus, thy moſt ſweet redeemer, creator, lover, and benefactor.

Do

Do thou therefore without delay join thyſelf to Chriſt, and ſay from thy heart: "O Lord Jeſus, I deſpiſing the devil, from henceforth purpoſe, thy grace aſſiſting me, to follow, imitate, and love thee, my king.

2. As Jeſus Chriſt thy king, the moſt high God, humbled himſelf in aſſuming human fleſh, and the form of a ſervant, by being born of a poor virgin, by waſhing his diſciples feet, by moſt perfectly obeying his father and men: ſo thou muſt purpoſe hereafter to humble thyſelf under all things for his love.

Thou muſt willingly ſubmit thyſelf to all men; willingly ſerve all.

Willingly take the loweſt place, ſeeing thou art not worthy that the earth ſhould bear thee, by reaſon of thy ſins and ingratitude.

Thou muſt willingly perform vile and abject works, though thou ſhouldſt therefore ſuffer ſome ſhame before men.

Thou muſt willingly and readily obey men in lawful and convenient things, not only thy ſuperiors, but alſo thy equals, and inferiors,

3. As thy king Chriſt was always meek and humble of heart, ſo thou oughteſt hereafter to endeavour, that all rough and vicious emotions of anger be extinguiſhed in thee.

Thou muſt not be obſtinate in thy own ſenſe, nor adhere to thy own private judgment: but muſt wiſely prefer the judgment and will of others before thy own judgment and will.

Thou muſt from thy heart, repute thyſelf the moſt unworthy of all men, and renounce all vain glory and ſelf complacence, as much as thou

canſt.

canſt: acknowledging thyſelf to be nothing, to be able to do nothing, and to have nothing but ſins and defects.

Thou muſt therefore never uſurp to thyſelf any thing of Gods gifts, but muſt attribute all good things to God, and purely refer them to him.

Thou muſt chuſe and love rather not to be known and eſteemed by men, than to be known and praiſed.

4. As thy king Chriſt abſtained from all vanity, pomp, curioſity, and ſuperfluity in meat, drink, clothing, and other neceſſaries for his life; yea and choſe moſt abject poverty in his nativity and death: ſo alſo thou muſt purpoſe hereafter to uſe all things moderately, and to be content with ſimple meat and drink, and ſimple clothing; removing from thee whatever is vain, proud, or altogether ſuperfluous.

5. Again as thy king Chriſt did not follow ſenſual pleaſures and the delights of the fleſh, but thirſting even drank gall and vinegar, and adhered inordinately to nothing, and had moſt courteous manners and behaviour: ſo thou muſt purpoſe hereafter, to reject all impure and ſenſual delights and impure pleaſures.

Thou muſt reſtrain all thy ſenſes, thy ſight, hearing, taſte, and touch, and alſo thy tongue from all exceſs, vanity, and curioſity.

Thou muſt keep thy heart with diligence clean and free. Thou muſt not adhere by inordinate affection to any perſon, or to any periſhable thing.

Thou muſt ſhun immoderate laughter and all levity of manners. Thou

Thou muſt prudently decline noxious and ſuperfluous converſations of worldly men, and occaſions of ſinning.

Thou muſt ſpend the remainder of thy life, in a manner conducive to the honour of God, and with God's aſſiſtance, thou muſt endeavour to live ſoberly, chaſtly, purely and piouſly.

6. Beſides, as thy king, Chriſt, endured unjuſt accuſations of himſelf, revilings, perſecutions, and pains inflicted on him, moſt humbly, moſt patiently, moſt gently, and with a mind abſolutely reſigned: ſo thou hereafter muſt purpoſe, to endure patiently and gently reproof of thyſelf, injuries, reproaches, contempt, pains, and all croſſes for his love, taking all from his fatherly hand.

Thou muſt reſign thyſelf wholly, as well as thou canſt, to his moſt juſt judgment, and moſt acceptable good pleaſure: thou muſt leave thyſelf abſolutely to him, permitting him to ſend to thee, to take away from thee, whatever he will, and as he will. Thou muſt renounce all thy own will.

Thou muſt believe thyſelf to be worthy of all tribulation, and that no creature can ſo much afflict thee, as thou deſerveſt to be afflicted by reaſon of thy infinite iniquities.

Thou muſt not lightly complain, that any injury is done thee; nor ſay that thou ſuffereſt any thing unjuſtly: becauſe thou wilt always ſuffer leſs than thou haſt deſerved.

7. Laſtly, as Chriſt thy king, loving all men and deſiring the ſalvation of all, prayed even for

for his enemies, and makes his ſun to riſe upon the good and bad: ſo thou muſt purpoſe hereafter ſincerely to love all men, none excepted, deſire the ſalvation of all, and out of charity exhibit thyſelf, faithful, gracious, and ſweet to all eſpecially to thy enemies.

Thou muſt grieve, that ſo many ſouls ſtamped with the moſt noble image of God, periſh.

Thou muſt compaſſionate the afflicted; thou muſt deſpiſe nobody, judge nobody; for raſh judgments greatly hinder the grace of God.

8. Thou muſt diligently ponder theſe things with thyſelf. Thou muſt conſider attentively how true it is, when in the foregoing points, Chriſt is ſaid to have done this or that.

Thou muſt wiſh from thy heart to be conformable to him, that the diſciple may be as his maſter: and the moſt vile ſervant muſt not be proud, the ſupreme emperor ſhewing humility in all things.

Thou muſt examine thyſelf diligently, and ſee whether thou haſt an abſolute will to fulfil by co-operating with the grace of God, that which thou readeſt. For thou oughteſt to be ready to this without any tergiverſation.

If notwithſtanding thy nature repugning, thou perceiveſt thyſelf yet leſs ready, thou muſt not therefore be too puſilanimous, but muſt do what is in thy power, and have a good will; renounce vices, and reſign thyſelf as well as thou canſt.

Thou muſt pray to God that he would ſtrengthen thee, and give thee thoſe things, which

which are neceſſary for thy ſalvation, and are pleaſing to him.

If thou deſire and endeavour thus to imitate thy king, thou ſhalt without doubt come to his heavenly palace, and ſhall obtain everlaſting life and glory, with all his ſaints.

MEDITATION VII.

On the Glory of Heaven.

1. THOU muſt imagine that celeſtial country to be, as it were, a moſt ſplendid, glorious, and large city, built of moſt pure gold, and moſt precious jewels: or, if thou hadſt rather imagine it to be a moſt ſpacious country, and adorned with all the beauties of graſs, flowers, and trees, and filled with all fragrant ſweetneſs and delight: where there is ever a moſt pleaſant ſpring and delightful ſummer. Where there is pleaſantneſs, reſt, quietneſs, and peace ſurpaſſing all ſenſe.

2. Thou was created for the higheſt and infinite good, which is God. This good thou ſhalt have for the merit of the incarnation and paſſion of Chriſt, and ſhall enjoy it for all eternity, if here thou ſhalt have worſhipped God, purely and holily in fear and love.

Conſider, that this moſt pleaſant good contains in itſelf, ſuper-abundantly all nobleneſs, pulchritude, comelineſs, elegancy, ſweetneſs, delight, grace and perfection. This when thou haſt obtained, thou ſhalt not be able to deſire any thing more; for thou ſhalt find moſt fully in God, whatſoever may be deſired.

It

It is manifeſt therefore that the viſion of God is moſt highly pleaſant, and incomparably excels all delight imaginable. For if naturally thou willingly beholdeſt that which is beautiful, what, and how great joy will it be to thee, clearly to contemplate the divine eſſence, which is the fountain whence all beauty flows, and which is infinitely ſplendid, fair, comely, ſweet and delicious?

O what does he ſee, what does he hear, what does he ſmell, what does he taſte, what does he feel, who is united to God in heaven? Truly eye has not ſeen, nor ear heard, nor have the goods and joys entered into the heart of mortal man, which God has prepared for his elect.

3. In ſeeing God, thou ſhalt ſee all things, and know all things which thou wouldeſt know. Thou ſhalt behold in God the order of the whole univerſe and all truth.

Thou ſhalt enjoy the higheſt good and ſhalt always poſſeſs it, and thou ſhall have in it whatever is delightful.

Thou ſhalt be ſhined upon by the eternal wiſdom, and ſhalt moſt abundantly taſte the ſweetneſs of the divine peace.

Thou ſhalt be wholly abſorpt with the love of thy creator, ſhall be transformed into him, ſhalt always embrace him according to thy deſire, and ſhalt be perfectly united to him.

Thou ſhalt ſee the bright and ever quiet Trinity, and thou ſhalt know how the ſon is begotten by the father, and how the Holy Ghoſt proceeds from the father and the ſon; and how the father loves the ſon, and the ſon the father,

and

and both the Holy Ghoſt. Alſo how the father and the ſon and the Holy Ghoſt are one God.

Then thou ſhalt moſt perfectly praiſe God, and without any irkſomneſs or labour. Thou ſhalt praiſe him with all the bleſſed for ever and ever.

Now thou ſhalt never diſpleaſe him more, but ſhalt pleaſe him in all things.

4. Thou ſhalt ſee the excellency and beauty of the humanity of the ſon of God Jeſus Chriſt. O! how wilt thou rejoice, beholding the amiable Jeſus exalted, and glorious in his kingdom! who once in the world was for thy ſake, poor, deſpiſed, and afflicted.

Thou ſhalt alſo behold all the orders of the angelic ſpirits, and how thouſands of thouſands miniſter to their creator, and that the ſoldiers of God are numberleſs.

Thou ſhalt know moſt perfectly all the citizens of heaven; thou ſhalt know their inviolable peace, their moſt fervent charity, their moſt pleaſant ſociety, their unſhaken ſecurity, their inenarrable beauty, ſplendor and glory. All the bleſſed are illuſtrious and glorious princes and kings.

Thou ſhalt have moſt familiar and perpetual ſociety with Chriſt, and with all the bleſſed.

Aſſuredly all the joys of the world, compared with the leaſt joy of heaven, are meer bitterneſs. The vaſt ocean does not ſo much exceed in quantity one ſingle drop of water, as the leaſt pleaſure of the bleſſed does exceed all the delight and pleaſure that ever was in the world. And the joys of heaven ſhall never be ended,

never

never diminiſhed; nor interrupted for one ſingle moment for all eternity.

5. Beſides, when thy ſoul in the reſurrection ſhall have received thy glorious body, what joy ſhall it thence receive? For thy very body ſhall be moſt ſplendid, and much more bright than the ſun: it ſhall be moſt ſound, moſt firm, moſt beautiful, moſt pure, moſt odoriferous, incorruptible, impaſſible, moſt ſubtil, and very agile. Whence thy ſoul with its glorified body, can be wherever it will, in a very ſhort ſpace of time: nothing can hinder it, nothing put a ſtop or impediment to it.

Thou ſhalt alſo (after the reſurrection) conceive exceeding great joy from the happy renovation of this viſible world: which ſhall be of a far more elegant form than now it is.

The ſun, and moon, and ſtars, ſhall be ſeven times more bright than they are now. Henceforth there ſhall be no clouds, nor hail, nor rain, nor winds, nor lightning, nor thunder; night ſhall ceaſe to be, a perpetual day and clarity ſucceeding, as well on earth as in the heavens. The air ſhall have more light than it has now; the water ſhall be purer than it now is. The earth ſhall be fair as gold, and pellucid and plain as poliſhed cryſtal.

6. Such things God has prepared for thoſe who love him. O how unhappy are they, who for the moſt baſe pleaſures, delights, and vanities of this world, deprive themſelves of ſuch great joy!

But thou who readeſt theſe things, aſpire and make haſte to that never fading glory. Deteſt and

and fly all ſin, as much as thou canſt: contemn all tranſitory things, love God, love all men, and ſpend the time profitably which is allotted thee.

Thirteen ſhort PRECEPTS *neceſſary for one who aſpires to a perfect Life.*

PRECEPT I.

FOR the love of Jeſus Chriſt, who ſuffered very ſharp things for thy ſake, renounce the pleaſures of thy ſenſes. When thou doſt deſire to ſee, hear, ſmell, taſte, touch or ſpeak any thing, remember that thou muſt not obey thy ſenſuality inciting in thee, but reaſon and God ſpeaking in thee. Yea even be ready to want ſpiritual delights, according to God's good pleaſure and ordination. And when thou art recreated with inward comfort and ſweetneſs, have a care thou do not reſt in it, nor abuſe it to thy own private pleaſure.

PRECEPT II.

KEEP very diligently thy ſight, hearing, and tongue, that they do not decline to unlawful, vain, and unprofitable things. It behoves thee to be vigilant and very wary in thy ſpeech, that thou ſpeak not more words, nor otherwiſe than is convenient. Let thy ſpeech be ſuccinct, plain and quiet. Carefully rule and contain in good order all the parts of thy body. Avoid immoderate laughter and all lightneſs of behaviour.

PRECEPT III.

DO not adhere to any creature by inordinate affection, but die to all periſhable things, and keep thy heart free from them: for in ſuch a death, and in ſuch

ſuch a liberty does lie hid the moſt true and moſt pleaſant life.

PRECEPT IV.

BY an entire abnegation of thyſelf and reſignation, diligently deſtroy in thee vicious paſſions, and affections, and thy own will and ſelf ſeeking. But love dearly and only the divine will, and ever wiſh it, and ſubmit thyſelf wholly to it; ſo that whatever God wills, do thou alſo will. Every where ſeek rather the praiſe and honour of God, than thy own profit.

PRECEPT V.

IN all things which happen, wiſely regard the providence of God, and ſecurely commit thyſelf and all thy concerns to the Almighty; knowing that he has care of thee. Receive as from the hand of God, every adverſity and tribulation (whether internal or external) believing for certain that he has ſent it for thy profit and ſalvation. Then contentedly endure it to the very laſt; giving thanks to our Lord, and praiſing him, by whoſe permiſſion and order it happened. Thou muſt not be troubled for injuries that are done thee, nor impatiently complain to men of them. By calling to mind thy own wickedneſs and ingratitude, think thyſelf worthy, and as one whom all men ſhould reprehend, chide, contemn, vex, deride, and even trample under their feet. Wherefore art thou anxious, and dejected for the words of men, or for the temptations which thou ſuffereſt? Let men think, and ſay of thee what they pleaſe, let the world rage againſt thee, let the devil rage againſt thee, (as much as God permits.) Do thou in the mean time humbly and firmly repoſe thyſelf upon the Almighty, and in ſilence preſerve peace of mind. If thou duly weigheſt, what unworthy and bitter things, Jeſus Chriſt thy creator and redeemer, has ſuffered, thou wilt with a ready mind endure all things though never ſo grievous.

PRE-

PRECEPT. VI.

DEpreſs and put thyſelf beneath every creature, conſidering thy own vileneſs, and thy own nothing. If thou thinkeſt thyſelf to be any thing, when thou art nothing; if thou fooliſhly within thyſelf doſt magnify thy own works or exerciſes, thou art indeed very proud, and art an abomination before God. Whatever good thou haſt, it is God's not thine. Take heed therefore, leſt thou uſurp that to thyſelf which is God's. See that thou do not thence fooliſhly boaſt, and pleaſe thyſelf, and for that indeed diſpleaſe God. Judge thyſelf alſo unworthy of the very leaſt gift of God.

PRECEPT. VII.

WIllingly do the will, and follow the judgment of another in thoſe things which are lawful, denying thy own will, and forſaking thy own ſentiment. Ever obey moſt readily; becauſe whatever is done by obedience, is very grateful to God: on the contrary, he abhors whatever is done by diſobedience.

PRECEPT VIII.

BE content with few and plain things, after the example of our Lord Jeſus. Do not love vanity in thy apparel, nor luxurioufneſs in thy diet. How ungrateful wouldeſt thou be, if thou ſhouldeſt murmur for thy meat or drink, being leſs ſavory or delicate, when for thy ſake Chriſt drank gall and vinegar! If even ſuch things as ſeem neceſſary are wanting, praiſe God, confide in him, who cannot forſake his ſervants, though ſometimes he may profitably permit them to be pinched with want.

PRECEPT IX.

SIncerely love all men, as thy brothers and ſiſters, having impreſſed upon them the noble image of God. Shew a loving and gracious countenance, and

ſpeak

ſpeak kind words to all, and eſpecially to thy enemies and perſecutors, by the ſweetneſs of holy charity healing and extinguiſhing in thee, all bitterneſs of heart. Be ready to help and comfort all. Compaſſionate thoſe that are afflicted, and thoſe that ſin. Rejoice for the virtues of others, as for thy own, and repute the miſery of others as thy own; deeming every one to be thyſelf.

PRECEPT X.

DEſpiſe nobody. Baniſh out of thy heart with great diligence raſh judgments, and baſe ſuſpicions. Accuſtom thyſelf to think well of all, with a ſimple heart, interpret the ſayings and doings of others to the beſt. Heartily prefer all men before thyſelf. Believe thyſelf to be the moſt ungrateful and vileſt of all mankind. Say to thyſelf, ſay to God, I am not worthy the earth ſhould bear me. O if thou waſt wiſe, willingly wouldeſt thou for God's ſake do the moſt abject works! how cheerfully wouldeſt thou ſerve every body? For even Chriſt our Lord took the form of a ſervant, being made man, and waſhed the feet of his diſciples.

PRECEPT XI.

STudy to pleaſe God above all things, and deſire rather to be deſpiſed, than to be praiſed and honoured.

PRECEPT XII.

ENtertain pious and holy thoughts, and every where take notice of the preſence of God, holding ſweet converſe with him, whether thou feeleſt or feeleſt not devotion. To recollect thy ſpirit, and to conſider reverently the preſence of God, theſe words often repeated may much help thee; "O Lord, my God, thou art always preſent with me, thou dwelleſt in my ſoul: may I always have a ſenſe of thy preſence." *Amen.*

PRE-

PRECEPT XIII.

WHatever is not God, do not greatly care for it, nor deem it much to concern thee; for ſo thou wilt be able by a holy introſpection, and with a free mind to attend to God himſelf. And indeed, it is the one thing neceſſary; which to obtain thou oughteſt always to labour, ſtrive, and do what is in thy power; yet ſo that thou wholly deſpair of thyſelf and thy own endeavours, and place all thy hope in God alone, in his mercy and goodneſs, and in the ſole help of his grace. For without God, thou canſt do nothing but ſin.

Remember, however, that God never did deſpiſe, nor will deſpiſe a contrite heart: he never did reject, nor ever will reject thoſe who fly to him by true repentance. If thou doſt not ceaſe to riſe, he will not ceaſe to receive thee. Wherefore though thou ſhalt fall a hundred times, yea a thouſand times; as often as thou falleſt, ſo often riſe again with a holy hope of pardon; and riſing again, give thanks to our Lord, that he did not permit thee to fall more grievouſly, or to lye longer in ruin.

Thou canſt not more diſhonour God or do him a greater injury, than if for the multitude, long continuance, or enormity of thy ſins thou ſhoudeſt deſpair of his piety, mercy and goodneſs.

Ten MEDITATIONS which are very proper to bring the Soul to a Reſolution of ſerving God.

MEDITATION I.

On our Creation.

Preparation 1. PLACE yourſelf in the preſence of God.

2. Beſeech him to inſpire you.

Conſideration 1. Conſider that ſo many years ago you were not yet in the world, and that your being was a meer nothing. Where were we, O my ſoul, at that time? The world had laſted ſo many ages, and yet there was no news of us.

2. God has framed you out of this nothing, to make you what you are, meerly of his own goodneſs; having no need at all of you.

3. Conſider the being that God has given you; for it is the higheſt in this viſible world, capable of eternal life, and of being perfectly united with his divine majeſty.

Affections and reſolutions. 1. *Humble yourſelf exceedingly in the preſence of God, ſaying in your heart with the pſalmiſt.* O Lord, I am in thy ſight a meer nothing, and how hadſt thou remembrance of me to create me! Alas, my ſoul, thou waſt ingulphed in that ancient nothing, and hadſt yet been there had not God drawn thee thence. And what couldſt thou have done remaining there?

2. *Give*

2. *Give thanks to God.* O my great and good creator, how am I obliged to thee, ſince thou haſt vouchſafed to take me out of this nothing, and by thy great mercy to make me what I am? What can I do to bleſs thy holy name as I ought, and to render due thanks to thy ineſtimable goodneſs?

3. *Confound yourſelf.* But alas! my creator, inſtead of uniting myſelf to thee by love and ſervice, I have been a rebel to thee by my inordinate affections, wandering and ſtraying away from thee, to unite myſelf to ſin; valuing thy goodneſs no more than if thou hadſt not been my creator.

4. *Proſtrate yourſelf before God.* O my ſoul, know that the Lord is thy God: it is he that made thee, and not thou thyſelf. O God, I am the work of thy hands.

5. I will then no more henceforth take pleaſure in myſelf, ſince of myſelf I am nothing. Why doſt thou magnify thyſelf, O duſt and aſhes! Yea rather, O very nothing, why doſt thou exalt thyſelf? To humble therefore myſelf, I reſolve to do ſuch and ſuch things; to ſuffer ſuch and ſuch diſgraces: I will change my life, and henceforth follow my creator, and eſteem myſelf honoured with that condition and being which he has given me, employing it entirely in obedience to his will.

Concluſion. 1. *Give thanks to God.* Bleſs thy God, O my ſoul, and let all that is within me praiſe his holy name; for his goodneſs has drawn me, and his mercy has created me out of nothing.

2. *Offer.* O my God, I offer to thee the being which thou haſt given me: from my heart I dedicate and conſecrate it to thee.

3. *Pray.* O God, ſtrengthen me in theſe affections and reſolutions.

MEDITATION II.

On the End for which we were created.

Preparation 1. PLACE yourſelf in the preſence of God.

2, Beſeech him to inſpire you,

Conſideration 1. God has not placed you in this world for any need he has of you, who are altogether unprofitable to him, but only to exerciſe his goodneſs in you, by giving you his grace and glory. And to this end he hath enriched you with an underſtanding to know him, with a memory to be mindful of him, with a will to love him, an imagination to repreſent to yourſelf his benefits, eyes to behold his wondrous works, a tongue to praiſe him; and ſo of the other faculties.

2. Being created and put into the world for this intent, all actions contrary to it are to be avoided and rejected; and whatever conduceth not to this end ought to be contemned as vain and ſuperfluous.

3. Conſider the wretchedneſs of worldlings, who never think of this, but live as though they believed themſelves created for no other end, than to build houſes, plant trees, heap up riches, and ſuch like fooleries.

Affections

Affections and reſolutions. 1. Confound yourſelf, reproaching your ſoul with her miſery, which has hitherto been ſo great, as that ſhe hath ſeldom or never conſidered this. Alas! ſhall you ſay, how did I employ my thoughts, O God when I placed them not upon thee? What did I remember when I forgot thee? What did I love when I loved not thee? Alas! I ought to have fed upon truth, and I have glutted myſelf with vanity; I have ſerved the world, which was created but to ſerve me.

2. *Deteſt your paſt life.* I renounce you, O vain thoughts and unprofitable fancies: I abjure you, O frivolous and hateful remembrances: O unfaithful and diſloyal friendſhips, lewd and wretched ſlaveries, ungrateful contentments, and irkſome pleaſures, I abhor you.

3. *Return to God.* And thou, O my God, my ſaviour, thou ſhalt be from henceforth the ſole object of my thoughts; I will no more apply my mind to objects that may be diſpleaſing to thee. My memory ſhall entertain itſelf all the days of my life with the greatneſs of thy clemency ſo mercifully exerciſed on me: thou ſhalt be the delight of my heart, and the ſweetneſs of my affections.

4. Ah! ſuch and ſuch traſh and trifles to which I applied myſelf, ſuch and ſuch unprofitable employments, in which I have fooliſhly ſquandered away my days, ſuch and ſuch affections which have captivated my thoughts! To baniſh them, I will uſe ſuch and ſuch good remedies.

Concluſion 1. Thank God who made you for ſo excellent an end. Thou has created me, O

Lord for thyſelf, and for the everlaſting enjoyment of thy incomprehenſible glory: O when ſhall I be worthy of it? When ſhall I praiſe thee and bleſs thee as I ought?

2 *Offer.* I offer to thee, O my dear creator, all theſe affections and reſolutions, with all my heart and ſoul.

3. *Pray.* I beſeech thee, O God, to accept my deſires and purpoſes, and give thy holy benediction to my ſoul, to the end that it may accompliſh them, through the merits of thy bleſſed ſon's blood ſhed for me upon the croſs.

MEDITATION III.

On the Benefits of God.

Preparation 1. PLACE yourſelf in the preſence of God.

2. Beſeech him to inſpire you.

Conſideration 1. Conſider the corporal graces which God has beſtowed upon you; what a body, what conveniencies to maintain it, what health, and lawful recreations to entertain it, what friends and aſſiſtances? But conſider all this with reſpect to many other perſons much more worthy than yourſelf, who are deſtitute of all theſe bleſſings; ſome ſpoiled in their bodies, health, and limbs; others abandoned to the mercy of reproaches, contempts, and diſhonours; others oppreſſed with poverty; and God has not ſuffered you to become ſo miſerable.

2. Conſider the gifts of mind, how many are in the world ſtupid, frantick, or mad; and why are you not of this number? God has favoured

you

you. How many are there who have been brought up rudely and in groſs ignorance; and by God's providence you have been educated liberally and honourably.

3. Conſider the ſpiritual graces; you are a child of the catholick church; God has taught you to know him even from your moſt tender age. How often has he given you his graces? How many inſpirations, internal illuminations, and reprehenſions for your amendment? How frequently has he pardoned you your faults? How often has he delivered you from the occaſions of caſting yourſelf away to which you were expoſed? And were not all theſe years paſt given you as a time and opportunity to advance the good of your ſoul? Conſider in particular how good and gracious God has always been to you.

Affections and reſolutions. 1. *Admire the goodneſs of God.* O how good is my God towards me! O how gracious is he! How rich is thy heart, O Lord, in mercy, and liberal in clemency! O my ſoul, let us recount for ever how many favours he has done us!

2. *Be aſtoniſhed at your ingratitude.* But what am I, O Lord, that thou art ſo mindful of me? Ah! how great is my unworthineſs! Alas! I have trodden thy bleſſings under foot. I have diſhonoured thy graces, perverting them into abuſe and contempt of thy ſovereign goodneſs. I have oppoſed the depth of my ingratitude to the height of thy grace and favour.

3. *Stir thyſelf up to acknowledgment.* Well then my heart, be now no more unfaithful, ungrateful, and diſloyal to this great benefaction. And

how ſhall not my ſoul henceforth be wholly ſubject to God, who has done ſo many wonders and favours to me and for me?

4. Ah! withdraw then your body, from ſuch and ſuch ſenſualities; and conſecrate it to the ſervice of God, who has done ſo much for it.

Apply your ſoul to know and acknowledge him by ſuch exerciſes as ſhall be requiſite for that purpoſe. Employ diligently the means which you have to ſave your ſoul, and love Almighty God. Yes, O my God, I will be deligent in prayer; I will hear thy holy word, and put in practice thy inſpirations and counſels.

Concluſion 1. Thank God for the knowledge he hath now given you of your duty, and for the benefits hitherto received.

2. Offer him your heart with all your reſolutions.

3. Pray him that he will ſtrengthen you to practice them faithfully through the merits of his ſon's death.

MEDITATION. IV.

On Sin.

Preparation 1. PLACE yourſelf in the preſence of God.

2. Beſeech him to inſpire you.

Conſideration 1. Call to mind how long it is ſince you began to ſin, and examine how much, ſince that beginning, ſins have been multiplied in your heart. How every day you have increaſed them againſt God, againſt yourſelf, and againſt

againſt your neighbour, by work, by word, or by deſire.

2. Conſider your evil inclination, and how far you have followed them; and by theſe two points you ſhall find that your ſins are greater in number than the hairs of your head, yea than the ſands of the ſea.

3. Conſider in particular the ſin of ingratitude againſt God, which is a general ſin, and extends itſelf over all the reſt, making them infinitely more enormous. Conſider then how many benefits God has beſtowed upon you, and have you abuſed them all in prejudice of the giver: and in particular how many inſpirations have you deſpiſed; how many good motions have you made unprofitable? But above all, how many times have you received the ſacrament? And where are the fruits of it? What is become of all thoſe precious jewels with which your dear ſpouſe adorned you? All theſe have been buried under your iniquities. With what preparation have you received it? Think on this ingratitude, that God having run ſo far after you, you have run from him to loſe yourſelf.

Affections and reſolutions. 1. *Be confounded at your miſery.* O my God! how dare I appear before thine eyes? Alas! I am but the corruption of the world, and a very ſink of ſin and ingratitude. Is it poſſible that I have been ſo diſloyal, as not to have left any one of my ſenſes, nor any one of the powers of my ſoul, which I have not corrupted, violated, and defiled; and that not ſo much as one day of my life has paſſed, in which I have not brought forth ſuch

wicked effects? It is thus that I recompenſed the benefits of my creator, and the precious blood of my redeemer.

2. *Crave pardon*, and caſt yourſelf at the feet of your Lord, like the prodigal child, like a penitent Magdalen, or like a woman that has defiled her marriage-bed with all kind of adultery. Mercy, O Lord, upon this poor ſinner! Alas! O living fountain of compaſſion, have pity on this wretch.

3. *Reſolve to live better.* No, O Lord, never more with the help of thy grace, never more will I abandon myſelf to ſin. Alas! I have loved it too much; now I deteſt it, and embrace thee, O Father of mercy, I will live and die in thee.

4. To expiate my ſins paſt, I will accuſe myſelf of them courageouſly; and will not leave one unbaniſhed from my heart.

5. I will uſe all poſſible endeavours to extirpate all the roots of ſin out of my heart; and in particular ſuch and ſuch vices, which I am moſt inclined to.

6. To accompliſh this, I will conſtantly embrace, the means which I ſhall be adviſed to; and think I have never done enough to repair ſuch grievous offences.

Concluſion 1. Give God thanks for expecting your amendment till this hour. And bleſs him that he has given you theſe affections.

2. Offer him up your heart, that you may put them in execution

3. Deſire him to ſtrengthen you, *&c.*

MEDITATION V.

On Death.

Preparation 1. PLACE yourſelf in the preſence of God.

2. Beſeech him to inſpire you with his grace.

3. Imagine yourſelf to be extreamly ſick, lying on your bed, and without any hope of recovery.

Conſideration 1. Conſider the uncertainty of the day of your death, O my ſoul, thou muſt one day go out of this body; but when ſhall that day be? Shall it be in winter or in ſummer? In city or in country? By day or by night? Shall it be ſuddenly, or on notice given thee? By ſickneſs or by accident? Shalt thou have leiſure to make thy peace with God? Shalt thou have the conſolation of receiving the bleſſed ſacrament? Alas! of all this we know nothing at all; only certain it is, that we ſhall die, and that always ſooner than we imagine.

2. Conſider that then the world ſhall end in regard of you; for it will laſt no longer to you, it will turn upſide down before your eyes: for then the pleaſures and the vanities, the worldly joys and fond affection of our life will ſeem to us ſhadows and airy clouds. Ah, wretch! for what toys and trifles have I offended God? you ſhall then ſee that for a mere nothing you have forſaken him. On the contrary, devotion and good works, will then ſeem to you ſweet and delightful. O why did I not follow this lovely and pleaſant path? Then ſins which before

ſeemed very little, will appear as great as mountains, and your devotion very ſmall.

3. Conſider the long and languiſhing farewells your ſoul will then give this world: ſhe will then take her leave of riches, vanities, and all idle company; of pleaſures, paſtimes, friends and neighbours; of kindred, children, huſband and wife; in ſhort, of every creature; and finally, of her own body, which ſhe will leave pale, hideous and loathſome.

4. Conſider with what hurrying they will carry away this body, to cover it under the earth; which done, the world would think no more of you, than you have thought on others. O death, how void art thou of regard or pity!

5. Conſider how the ſoul, being departed from the body, takes her way to the right-hand, or to the left. Alas! whither ſhall your's go? What way ſhall it take? No other than which it began here in this world.

Affections and reſolutions. 1. *Pray to God, and caſt yourſelf into his arms.* Alas! O my Lord, receive me into thy protection at that dreadful day: make that hour happy and favourable to me; and rather let all the other days of my life be ſad and ſorrowful.

2. *Deſpiſe the world.* Since then I know not the hour in which I muſt leave thee, O wretched world I will no more ſet my heart upon thee. O my dear friends and relations, pardon me if I love you no more, but with a holy friendſhip, which may laſt eternally: for why ſhould I unite myſelf to you, ſo as to be forced to break and diſſolve that knot?

3. I will then prepare myſelf againſt that hour, and take all poſſible care to end this journey happily. I will ſecure the ſtate of my conſcience to the uttermoſt of my ability, and take preſent order for the amendment of ſuch and ſuch defects.

Concluſion. Give thanks to God for theſe reſolutions which he has given you, offer them to his divine majeſty. Be inſtant with him to give you a happy death, by the merits of that of his dearly beloved ſon.

MEDITATION VI.

On Judgment.

Preparation 1. PLACE yourſelf in the preſence of God.

2. Beſeech him to inſpire you with his grace.

Conſideration 1. After the time that God hath preſcribed for the continuance of the world; after many ſigns and dreadful preſages, which will cauſe men to pine way through fear and anguiſh; a fire raging like a torrent ſhall burn and reduce to aſhes every thing that is upon the face of the earth; nothing which we ſee upon it ſhall be ſpared.

2. After theſe flames and thunderbolts, all men ſhall ariſe from their graves (except ſuch as are already riſen) and at the voice of the angel they ſhall all appear in the valley of Joſaphat. But alas! with what difference? for the one ſort ſhall ariſe in glorified and reſplendent bodies; the others in bodies moſt hideous and horrid.

3. Con-

3. Conſider the majeſty with which the ſovereign judge will appear, environed with all his angels and ſaints: before him ſhall be borne his croſs, ſhining much brighter than the ſun; an enſign of mercy to the good, and of juſtice to the wicked.

4. This ſovereign judge, by his dreadful command, which ſhall be ſuddenly obeyed, will ſeparate the good from the bad, placing the one at his right-hand, and the other at his left. O everlaſting ſeparation! after which theſe two companies ſhall never meet.

5. The ſeparation being made, and the books of conſcience opened, all men ſhall ſee clearly the malice of the wicked, and their contempt againſt God; and on the other ſide the repentance of the good, and the effects of God's grace which they have received; and nothing ſhall lie hid. O God, what a confuſion will this be to the one, and what a conſolation to the other!

6. Conſider the laſt ſentence pronounced againſt the wicked: "Go, ye curſed into everlaſting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Ponder well thoſe weighty words. Go, ſaith he, a word of eternal baniſhment againſt thoſe miſerable wretches, excluding them eternally from his glorious preſence. He calls them curſed. O, my ſoul, how dreadful a curſe! A general curſe, including all manner of woes; an irrevocable curſe, comprehending all time and eternity. He adds, "into everlaſting fire." Behold, O my heart, this vaſt eternity! O eternal eternity of pains, how dreadful art thou!

7. Con-

7. Conſider the contrary ſentence of the good. Come, ſaith the judge, O ſweet word of ſalvation, by which God draws us to himſelf, and receives us into the boſom of his goodneſs! "Bleſſed of my father," O dear bleſſing, which comprehends all happineſs! "Poſſeſs the kingdom which is prepared for you from the beginning of the world." O good God, what exceſs of bounty! For this kingdom ſhall never have an end.

Affections and reſolutions. 1. *Tremble, O my ſoul, at the remembrance of theſe things.* O my God, who ſhall ſecure me in that day, when the pillars of heaven ſhall tremble for fear?

2. Deteſt your ſins, which only can condemn you in that dreadful day.

3. *Ah! wretched heart of mine, reſolve to amend.* O Lord, I will judge myſelf now, that I may not be judged then. I will examine my conſcience, and condemn myſelf, I will accuſe and chaſtiſe myſelf, that the eternal judge may not condemn me in that dreadful day. I will therefore humbly confeſs my ſins. Accept of all neceſſary advice, *&c.*

Concluſion. Thank God, who has given you means to provide for that day, and time for repentance. Offer him your heart to perform it. Pray him to give you grace duly to accompliſh it.

MEDITATION VII.

On Hell.

Preparation 1. PLACE yourſelf in the preſence of God.

2. Humble yourſelf in the preſence of God.

3. Repreſent to yourſelf a dark city, all burning, all ſtinking with pitch and brimſtone, and full of inhabitants, who cannot get out.

Conſideration 1. The damned are in the depth of hell, as within this woful city, where they ſuffer unſpeakable torments, in all their ſenſes and members; becauſe, as they have employed all their ſenſes and members in ſinning, ſo ſhall they ſuffer in them all the puniſhments due to ſin. The eyes, for laſcivious looks ſhall be afflicted with the horrid viſion of hell and devils. The ears, for delighting in vicious diſcourſes, ſhall hear nothing but wailings, lamentations, deſperate howlings; and ſo of the reſt.

2. Beſides all theſe torments, there is another greater, which is the loſs and privation of God's glory, from the ſight of which they are excluded for ever. Now if Abſalom found it more grievous to him to be denied ſeeing the face of his father David, than to be baniſhed; O God, what a grief will it be, to be for ever excluded from beholding thy moſt ſweet and gracious countenance!

3. Conſider above all, the eternity of theſe pains, which above all things makes hell intolerable. Alas! if a flea in your ear, or if the heat of a little fever make one ſhort night ſo long and tedious, how terrible will the night of eternity

eternity be, accompanied with ſo many torments! from this eternity proceeds eternal deſpair, infinite rage, and blaſphemy, *&c.*

Affections and reſolutions. 1. Terrify yourſelf with the words of the prophet Iſaiah; O, my ſoul, art thou able to live for ever in everlaſting flames, and amidſt this devowring fire? Wilt thou forfeit the ſight of thy God for ever?

2. *Confeſs that you have deſerved hell, yea oftentimes.* From henceforth will I take a new courſe; for why ſhould I go down into this bottomleſs pit? I will therefore uſe this or that endeavour to avoid ſin, which only can bring me to this eternal death. Give thanks, offer, pray.

MEDITATION VIII.

On Heaven.

Preparation 1. PLACE yourſelf in the preſence of God.

2. Beſeech him to inſpire you with his grace.

Conſideration 1. Conſider a fair and clear night, and think how pleaſant it is to behold the ſky all ſpangled with that multitude and variety of ſtars: join this now with the beauty of as clear a day, ſo as the brightneſs of the ſun may no way hinder the luſtre of the ſtars nor moon; and then ſay boldly, that all this put together is nothing in compariſon with the excellent beauty of the heavenly paradiſe. Oh! how this lovely place is to be deſired! Oh! how precious is that city!

2. Conſider the glory, beauty and multitude of the inhabitants in this bleſſed country: thoſe millions

millions of millions of angels, cherubims, and ſeraphims: thoſe troops of apoſtles, prophets, martyrs, confeſſors, virgins, and holy matrons. The number is innumerable. O how bleſſed is this company! The meaneſt of them is more beautiful to behold than all this world: what a ſight then will it be to ſee them all! but, O my God, how happy are they! they ſing continually harmonious ſongs of eternal love; they always enjoy a conſtant mirth; they interchange one with another unſpeakable contentments, and live in the comfort of a happy and indiſſoluble ſociety.

3. In fine, conſider how bleſſed they are to enjoy God, who rewards them for ever with his lovely aſpect, and by the ſame infuſes into their hearts a treaſure of delights: how great a happineſs is it to be united everlaſtingly to this ſovereign good. They are there like happy birds flying and ſinging perpetually in the air of his divinity, which encompaſſes them in all ſides with incredible pleaſure. There every one does his beſt, and without envy ſings the creator's praiſe. Bleſſed be thou for ever, O ſweet and ſovereign creator and redeemer, who are ſo bountiful to us, and doſt communicate to us ſo liberally the everlaſting treaſures of thy glory: bleſſed be you for ever, ſays he, my beloved creatures who have ſo faithfully ſerved me, and who now ſhall praiſe me everlaſtingly, with ſuch great love and courage.

Affections and reſolutions. 1. Admire and praiſe this heavenly country; O, how beautiful art thou, my

my dear Jeruſalem! and how happy are thy inhabitants!

2. *Reproach your heart with the little courage it has had hitherto, in wandering ſo far from the way of this glorious habitation.* O, why have I ſtrayed ſo far from my ſovereign good? Ah! wretch that I am, for theſe fooliſh and trivial pleaſures have I a thouſand thouſand times forſaken eternal and infinite delights! was I not mad to deſpiſe ſuch precious bleſſings for ſuch vain and contemptible affections!

3. *Aſpire now with fervour to this delightful habitation.* O my gracious God, ſince it has pleaſed thee at length to direct my wandering ſteps into the right way, never hereafter will I turn back. Let us go, my dear ſoul, let us go to this eternal repoſe: let us walk towards this bleſſed land that is promiſed us. What have we to do in this Egypt? I will therefore diſburthen myſelf of all ſuch things as may divert or retard me in ſo happy a journey: I will perform ſuch and ſuch things as may conduct me to it.

Give thanks, offer, pray.

MEDITATION IX.

By way of Election and Choice of Heaven.

Preparation 1. PLACE yourſelf in the preſence of God.

2. Humble yourſelf before his majeſty, and beſeech him to inſpire you with his grace.

3. Imagine yourſelf to be in a plain field, all alone with your good angel, as young Tobias going to Rages, and that he ſhews you heaven open,

open, with all the pleaſures repreſented in the foregoing meditation; then beneath that he ſhews you hell wide open, with all the torments deſcribed in the meditation of hell: you being thus fixed in your imagination, and kneeling by your good angel.

Conſideration 1. Conſider that it is moſt true, you are between heaven and hell; and that the one and the other is open to receive you according to the choice you ſhall make.

2. Conſider that the choice which you ſhall make in this world ſhall laſt for all eternity in the other.

3. And though both the one and the other be open to receive you, according to your choice, yet God, who is ready to give you either the one by his juſtice, or the other by his mercy, deſires notwithſtanding, with an incomparable deſire, that you would make choice of heaven; and your good angel importunes you with all his power, offering you on God's behalf a thouſand aſſiſtances, and a thouſand graces to help you thither.

4. Conſider that Jeſus Chriſt beholds you from above in his clemency, and graciouſly invites you, ſaying, Come, my dear ſoul, to everlaſting reſt within the arms of my goodneſs, where I have prepared immortal delights for thee in the abundance of my love. Behold the ſaints alſo exhorting you, and millions of bleſſed ſouls ſweetly inviting you, and wiſhing nothing more than to ſee your heart united with theirs in praiſing and loving God for ever; aſſuring you, that the way to heaven is not ſo hard as the

the world makes it. Be of good courage, dear brother, ſay they, he that ſhall diligently conſider the ways of devotion, by which we aſcended hither, ſhall ſee that we came to theſe immortal delights by pleaſures incomparably more ſweet than thoſe of the world.

Election. 1. O hell, I deteſt thee now and for evermore: I deteſt thy torments and pains; I deteſt thy miſerable and accurſed eternity: and above all, I deteſt thoſe eternal blaſphemies and maledictions, which thou vomiteſt out eternally againſt my God. And turning my heart and ſoul to thee, O beautiful paradiſe, everlaſting glory and endleſs felicity, I chuſe my habitation for ever, and irrevocably, within thy fair and bleſſed manſions, within thy holy and moſt lovely tabernacles. I bleſs thy mercy, O my God, and accept the offer which it pleaſeth thee to make me of it. O my ſweet ſaviour Jeſus, I accept thy everlaſting love, and the purchaſe which thou haſt made for me of a place in this heavenly Jeruſalem, not ſo much for any other thing, as to love and bleſs thee for ever and ever.

2. Accept the favours offered you: and give your hand to your good angel, that he may guide you thither. Encourage your ſoul to make this choice.

MEDITATION X.

By Way of Election and Choice which the Soul makes of a devout Life.

Preparation. 1. PLACE yourſelf in the preſence of God.

2. Proſtrate yourſelf before him, and implore the aſſiſtance of his grace.

Conſideration. 1. Imagine yourſelf again to be in a plain field all alone with your good angel; and that you ſee on your left-hand the devil, ſeated on a great high throne, with many infernal ſpirits about him, and environed by a great troop of worldings, who all acknowledge him for their Lord, and do him homage, ſome by one ſin, and ſome by another. Obſerve the countenance of all the wretched courtiers of this abominable king. Behold ſome of them tranſported with hatred, envy and paſſion; others killing one another; others conſumed with cares, penſive and anxious to heap up riches; others bent upon vanity, others wallowing in the mire, buried and putrified in their brutiſh affections. Behold, how they are all without reſt, order and decency: behold how they deſpiſe one another, and love but in ſhew. In a word, you ſhall ſee a lamentable commonwealth, miſerably tyrannized over by this curſed king, which will move you to compaſſion.

2. On the other ſide, behold Jeſus Chriſt crucified, who with a cordial love prays for theſe poor enthralled people, that they may be freed from this tyranny, and calls them to himſelf:

ſelf: behold round about him a troop of devout perſons with their angels. Contemplate the beauty of this kingdom of devotion. O, what a ſight it is to ſee this troop of virgins, men, and women, whiter than the lillies; that aſſembly of widows full of holy mortification and humility! See the ranks of divers married people living peaceably together with mutual reſpect, which cannot be without great charity. Conſider how theſe devout ſouls join the exterior care of the houſe with the care of the interior, the love of the huſband with that of the celeſtial bridegroom. Conſider them all univerſally, and you ſhall ſee in them a ſweet, holy and lovely order, obſerving our Saviour, whom every one would willingly plant in the midſt of his heart. They are full of Joy, but that joy is comely, charitable and well ordered; they love one another, but their love is more pure and holy: ſuch as ſuffer afflictions among this devout company torment not themſelves much, nor loſe courage. Laſtly, behold thoſe eyes of our Saviour, who comforts them, and how they all together aſpire to him.

3. You have already ſhaken off Satan with all his curſed execrable troop by the good affections and reſolutions you have conceived; but you are not yet arrived at Jeſus, nor united with this bleſſed and holy company of devout people, but have hitherto kept yourſelf between the one and the other.

Election. O World! O abominable troop! No, never more ſhall you ſee me under your banner. I have for ever left off your fooleries and

and vanities. O king of pride, O curſed king, infernal ſpirit, I renounce thee, with all thy vain pomps, I deteſt thee with all thy works.

2. And turning myſelf to thee, my dear Jeſus, king of felicity and immortal glory, I embrace thee with all the powers of my ſoul, I adore thee with all my heart, I chuſe thee now and ever for my king, and with inviolable fidelity I pay thee irrevocable homage, and ſubmit myſelf to the obedience of thy holy laws and ordinances.

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26 Dec 0/13

Pious Reflections for every Day in the Month.

FIRST DAY.

Of the Want of Faith in the World.

"AT the coming of the ſon of man, do you believe he ſhall find faith upon earth?" Should he inſtantly come, would he find any in us? Where is our faith? Where are the marks thereof? Do we believe this life, to be but a ſhort paſſage to a better? Do we think, that to reign with Jeſus Chriſt in the next, we muſt ſuffer with him in this? Do we conſider the world as a deceitful image, and death as the inlet to true happineſs? Do we live by faith? Is faith the ſoul that enliveneth us? Do we reliſh thoſe eternal truths ſhe ſets before us? Do we as carefully nouriſh our ſouls therewith, as we do our bodies with convenient food? Do we accuſtom ourſelves to judge of all things only by Faith? Do we by her rectify all our judgments? Alas! ſo far are we from living by faith,

faith, that we even extinguiſh it in our ſoul and our heart. We judge, we act like Pagans. Would any one act as we do, who believed what we are bound to believe?

2. Let us apprehend, leſt the kingdom of God be taken from us, and given to ſuch as will better produce the fruits thereof. The kingdom of God is faith, when it reigneth and ruleth within us. Happy is he who has eyes to behold this kingdom. Fleſh and blood have not. The wiſdom of the animal man is blind in that reſpect, and it is his will to be ſo. The interiour operations of God, are a dream to him. We muſt be born a-new to ſee the wonders of this kingdom, and muſt die, to be born a-new. This is what the world cannot conſent to. Let the world then deſpiſe, let it condemn, let it mock at pleaſure, as for us, O my God, we are commanded to believe, and taſte the celeſtial gift. We are willing to be of the number of your elect, of which we know none can be, whoſe life is not conformable to what you have taught.

SECOND DAY.

On the only Way to Heaven.

"STRIVE to enter in at the narrow gate." The kingdom of heaven, is entered only by violence, like unto a place beſieged, it muſt be carried by ſtorm. The gate is narrow. The body of ſin muſt be put to the torture. We muſt humble ourſelves, we muſt bend and creep and become little. The great gate by which the crowd paſſeth, and which ſtandeth open for us, leadeth unto death; we ought to be terrified at all wide and ſmooth ways. Wo unto us, whilſt the world ſmileth upon us, and the way we are in ſeemeth ſweet. We never, are in a better way for the life to come, than when this preſent frowneth on us. Let us then be careful not to follow the multitude, who walk by a large and commodious way: we muſt ſeek out the tracks of the ſmall number, the footſteps of the ſaints, the

the ſteep path of penitential work. Let us then climb the rock, clamber unto places of ſafety, with the ſweat of our brow, and make violent efforts to enter the narrow gate of eternity.

2. We are predeſtinated of God, only in as much as we conform to the image of his ſon, like him faſtened to the croſs, like him renouncing all ſenſible pleaſures, content like him to be in anguiſh. But ſuch is our blindneſs, we would free ourſelves from the croſs, which unites us to our maſter. We cannot quit the croſs, without quitting Jeſus Chriſt crucified. The croſs and he are inſeparable, let us live and die with him, who is come to ſhew us the true way to heaven. Let us fear nothing, but not finiſhing our ſacrifice on the ſame altar where he compleated his. Alas! all the efforts we endeavour to make in this life, ſerve only to ſet us wider, and remove us farther from the only way to heaven. We know not what we are doing. We comprehend not, that the myſtery of grace unites beatitude with tears; all ways leading to a throne are delightful though never ſo thick ſet with thorns. All ways are frightful which carry to a precipice, though all covered with roſes. In the narrow way, we ſuffer but ſtill we hope; we ſuffer, but we ſee the heavens open; we ſuffer but it is with a willing heart; we love God and are beloved by him.

THIRD DAY.

On true Devotion.

REligion is vain in the heart of him who miſleads himſelf. What abuſes are there in devotion? Some make it conſiſt in a multiplicity of prayers, others in a number of works, tending to the glory of God and relief of our neighbour. Others place it in a conſtant deſire of ſalvation, ſome in great auſterities. All theſe things are good, and even neceſſary in ſome degree; but we deceive ourſelves, if therein we fix the foundation and eſſence of true piety. That piety by which

which we are ſanctified, and by which we are entirely devoted to God, conſiſts in doing his will, and fulfilling preciſely all he requireth of us, in whatever time, place and circumſtances he putteth us. Move as you will, let your deeds carry what luſtre, and be what you pleaſe, your reward ſhall only be in as much as you have done the will of your ſovereign maſter. Should your ſervant perform wonders in your houſe, if he did not what you required, you would have no regard to his actions, and you would with reaſon complain of being ill ſerved.

2. The devoting ourſelves entirely, from whence the term devotion hath been taken, doth not only require that we do the will of God, but that we do it with love. God loves what is, ſhould be chearfully given, and in all he preſcribeth, the heart is what he always requireth. Such a maſter well deſerveth, his ſervants ſhould think themſelves happy in belonging to him. This devoting muſt every where maintain itſelf equally in what diſpleaſeth, in what checketh, in what contradicteth our views, our inclinations, our projects, and it muſt keep us in a readineſs, to give all our fortunes, our welfare, our time, our liberty, our life and our reputation. To be thus diſpoſed, and to act accordingly, this is to have true devotion. But as the will of God is often hid from us, there remaineth yet to make one ſtep of ſelf denial and death, that is to accompliſh it by obedience and a blind obedience, though diſcreet in its blindneſs. A condition impoſed on all mankind, the moſt enlightened among them, the propereſt to draw ſouls to God, and the moſt capable of conducting others, muſt itſelf be guided.

FOURTH DAY.

On cowardly and imperfect Converſions.

PEople who were diſtant from God, take themſelves to be very near him, the inſtant they begin to make ſome ſteps to approach him. The moſt ingenuous and

clear ſighted, are in that reſpect equally ignorant and ſtupid with any country fellow, who for having had a ſight of the king, ſhould think himſelf to be in favour at court. They forſake thoſe vices which give horror. They contract themſelves into a leſs criminal way of life, but ſtill cowardly, worldly and diſſipated. They judge then of themſelves, not by the goſpel, which they ought to take for their only rule, but by a compariſon made of the paſt with the preſent life they lead. Nothing more is wanting to cannonize one's ſelf, and to fall into a profound ſleep; in regard to all that may remain uneffected for ſalvation. Such a ſtate is more to be ſuſpected than a ſcandalous diſorder. Such a diſorder would diſturb the conſcience, awaken faith, and put them on making ſome great effort; whereas this change ſerveth only to ſtifle wholſome remorſes, eſtabliſh a falſe repoſe in the heart, and render the evils incurable. I have, ſay you, repented of the frailties of my paſt life, I read good books, I frequent church with modeſty, and pray to God as ſeemeth unto me, with a tolerable good heart. I avoid at leaſt great ſins; but I muſt own I feel not myſelf ſufficiently touched, to live as if I were no more of this world, and not to keep any farther meaſures with it. Religion would be too ſevere, did it not allow of ſo honeſt a mean: all the fine ſpun notions propoſed at preſent, on devotion are too far ſtretched, and ſerve rather to diſcourage than inſpire a love of what is good. This is a diſcourſe of a cowardly chriſtian, who would gain heaven at a vile price, and conſiders not what is due unto God, nor what the poſſeſſing him hath coſt thoſe who have obtained him. A man of this character is very remote from an intire converſion. Likely he knows not the extent of the law of God. It may be imagined that had God intruſted the compoſing of the goſpel to him, he would not have made it ſuch as it is. And we certainly ſhould have ſomething milder in relation to ſelf love. But the goſpel is unalterable, and by it we are to be judged. Let us then forthwith

take

take a ſure guide, and apprehend nothing ſo much as being flattered and deceived.

FIFTH DAY.

On a good Spirit.

"YOUR heavenly father will give his good ſpirit unto thoſe who ſhall demand it of him." There is no good ſpirit but that of God: that ſpirit which removeth us from the true good, be it never ſo penetrating, ſo agreeable, ſo dextrous, and ſo ingenious to procure us corruptible riches, is but a ſpirit of illuſion; and leadeth us aſtray. Would any one be carried in a glittering magnificent chariot which ſhould conduct to an abyſs. The ſpirit is only made to conduct unto truth and ſovereign good. There is then no good ſpirit but that of God, becauſe no other ſpirit but his leadeth unto him. Let us renounce our own, if we deſire to have his. Happy is the man who ſtrips himſelf to be cloathed, who trampleth on his own wiſdom to poſſeſs that of God.

2. The difference is great between a fine, a ſuperior and a good genius. The fine pleaſeth by its agreeableneſs. The ſuperior excites admiration by its depth: but the good is that only ſpirit, which by its ſolidity and uprightneſs ſaveth and rendereth happy. Conform not your notions to thoſe of the world. Deſpiſe that wit, as much as the world eſteemeth it. What is termed wit, is a certain facility of producing bright thoughts. Nothing is more vain. Our wit becomes our idol, as doth a woman's face when ſhe fancieth herſelf to be beautiful. We admire ourſelves in our thoughts. Not only that falſe ſplendor of wit, is to be caſt off, but that human prudence alſo, which appeareth moſt ſerious and moſt uſeful, that we may like little children enter into the ſimplicity of faith, by candour and innocence of manners, by horror of ſin, by humiliation and the holy folly of the croſs.

SIXTH DAY.

On Patience in Affliction.

"YOU ſhall poſſeſs your ſouls by your patience." The ſoul when it becometh impatient; ſlippeth from itſelf, whereas when ſhe ſubmits without murmuring ſhe poſſeſſeth herſelf in peace and poſſeſſeth God. To be impatient, is to deſire what one hath not, or not to bear willingly what one doth. An impatient ſoul is a ſoul delivered up to its paſſions, which is reſtrained neither by reaſon or faith. What weakneſs! what ſtraying! evil borne willingly is no longer an evil. Why make we a real evil by not being reſigned unto it? Interior peace reſideth not in the ſenſes, but the will; in the midſt of the bittereſt afflictions it remaineth intire, as long as the will ſtandeth firm and reſigned. The peace of this world conſiſts in accepting contrary things, and not in being excuſed from bearing them.

2. To hear you grumble and murmur, one would take you to be the moſt innocent ſoul breathing, and that it was a crying piece of injuſtice not to ſuffer you to re-enter the terreſtial paradiſe. Call to mind all you have acted againſt God, and acknowledge he has reaſon; ſay unto him with that humility of the prodigal child, "Father I have ſinned againſt heaven and you;" I know not what from me is owing to your juſtice, but I want a heart to make ſatisfaction. Would you leave it to my deciſion, I ſhould flatter, ſpare and betray myſelf by my flattery; but your merciful hand executes of itſelf what I likely ſhould never have courage to do; its goodneſs ſtriketh me. Grant that I patiently bear its wholſome correction; the leaſt a ſinner, truly provoked at himſelf, can do, is to receive that puniſhment, he ſhould not have had the ſtrength to make choice of.

SEVENTH

SEVENTH DAY.

On Submiſſion and Conformity to the Will of God.

"THY will be done on earth, as it is in heaven." Nothing is done here below, any more than in heaven above, but by the will and permiſſion of God. Yet men love not always this will, becauſe it ſuits not always with their deſires. Let us love it, and love nothing beſides it, and we ſhall make a heaven of the earth. We ſhall give God thanks for all things, for evils as well as benefits, ſince evils become good when
43 beſtowed by him. No longer ſhall we murmur at the conduct of his providence; we ſhall find out and adore the wiſdom of it. O God! what do I ſee in the courſe of the ſtars, in the order of the ſeaſons, in the events of life, but the accompliſhment of your will. May the ſame be alſo fulfilled in me: may I love it, may I be entirely ſweetened by it; may I annihilate my own, to cauſe yours to reign: for in fine, O Lord, to you it belongeth to command, and to me to obey.

2. You have ſaid, O Lord Jeſus, ſpeaking of yourſelf, with relation to your celeſtial father, that you always did his pleaſure; teach us how far this example is to lead us. You are our model; you acted nothing on earth, but according to the liking of your father, who is alſo willing to be named ours. Act in us as in yourſelf, purſuant to his holy will, that being inſeparably united to you, we regard only his deſires. Let the ſole view of pleaſing him be the motive of all our actions, not only when praying, inſtructing, ſuffering, edifying; but even eating, ſleeping, or converſing. Then will all be ſanctified in our conduct; then will all be in us a continual ſacrifice; prayers without intermiſſion, love without interruption. When, O my God, ſhall we be in this ſituation! Vouchſafe by your grace to reduce and ſubject our rebellious will, which knows not what it would have; there is no other good but in being what you require us.

EIGHTH DAY.

On the Benefits of Prayer.

"PRAY without intermiſſion." Such is our dependence in regard to God, that we not only ought to do all things for his ſake, but to demand alſo of him the means of pleaſing him. This happy neceſſity of having recourſe to him in all our wants, far from cauſing in us any uneaſineſs, ought rather to be our comfort. What happineſs to addreſs ourſelves with confidence to him, to unfold our heart to him, and to converſe intimately with him by prayer. He invites us to pray unto him. Judge you, ſaith Cyprian, "whether he will refuſe us thoſe benefits, he ſollicits us to demand of him." Let us then pray with faith, and not loſe the fruit of our prayers by a wavering incertitude, which, as, ſaith St. James, "occaſions us to heſitate." Happy that ſoul which comforteth itſelf in prayer, by the preſence of its well beloved. Is any among you ſad, ſaith St. James, let him ſeek relief in prayer. Alas! unhappy we! this celeſtial occupation is but a toil to us. The tepidity of our prayers is the fountain head of our other infidelities.

"Aſk, and it ſhall be given unto you, ſeek and ye ſhall find, knock and it ſhall be opened unto you." Were riches to be obtained for barely aſking for them, what earneſtneſs, what aſſiduity, what perſeverance would we not have? Were a treaſure to be found for only ſeeking, what ground would we not break? could knocking at the door, ſuffice to be let into the council of kings, and into the higheſt preferments, what repeated ſtrokes would not one hear? But what is there left undone in ſearch of falſe happineſs? What rebukes, what diſappointments do not people endure for the ſhadow of worldly honour, what pains for wretched pleaſures, whereof nothing remaineth but remorſe. The treaſure of grace is true felicity, and the only one, we diſdain to aſk for; the only one our patience

tience is tired in waiting for. We ought nevertheleſs to knock without ceaſing, for the word of Jeſus Chriſt is faith, our conduct has none; it is our own conduct that deceives us, not the word of Jeſus Chriſt which cannot.

NINTH DAY.

On Attention to the Voice of God.

"LORD unto whom ſhall we go, thou haſt the words of eternal life." It is Jeſus Chriſt we are to liſten unto. Men are to be heard or believed, only in as much as they are filled with the truth and authority of Jeſus Chriſt. Books are good only in as much as they teach the goſpel. Let us then go to this ſacred fountain, Jeſus Chriſt neither ſpoke nor acted but to the end we might liſten unto him, and ſtudy with attention the actions of his whole life. Unhappy we! our own imaginations, which are but vanity, we run after, and neglect truth itſelf, the words whereof are capable to make us live for ever. Speak, O word divine! O word increated and incarnate for me! cauſe my ſoul to comprehend you; make your will intirely known, whatever is pleaſing to you is ſo to me.

2. It is often ſaid, one would know, what is to be done to advance in virtue; but no ſooner doth the ſpirit of God therein direct us, but our courage faileth us for the execution. We are ſufficiently ſenſible of our not being what we ought. We behold our miſeries, and ſee them daily on the increaſe. Notwithſtanding we think it a great deal, to ſay we deſire to be ſaved. That will is of no account, which proceedeth not ſo far as to ſacrifice whatever ſtoppeth us in the way to God. Let us no longer detain truth captive, by our unjuſt cowardice; let us harken to what God inſpireth in us, let us try the ſpirit that inciteth us to make a right judgment, whether it proceedeth from God. When we are aſſured of it, let us ſpare for nothing to content it: the Prophet aſketh, not

ſimply of God, that he would teach him his will, but that he would inſtruct him to fulfill it.

TENTH DAY.

On the right Uſe of Croſſes.

"THOSE who belong unto Jeſus Chriſt have crucified their fleſh with their vices and concupiſcence.' The more we apprehend croſſes, the more may we be aſſured of our ſtanding in need of them. Let us not be dejected when the hand of God layeth heavy ones upon us. We ought to judge of the greatneſs of our diſtempers, by the violence of the remedies applied unto them by the ſpiritual phyſician. We muſt be extremely wretched, and God extremely merciful, when notwithſtanding the difficulty of our converſion, he vouchſafeth to take in hand our cure. Let us even from our croſſes extract a ſource of love, of comfort, and of confidence, ſaying with the apoſtle, "Our ſufferings are ſo ſhort and ſo light, that they bear no proportion with that infinite weight of glory which is to be the reward of them." Happy are thoſe who weep, and ſow in ſhedding tears, ſince they ſhall, with ineffable joy, reap the harveſt of eternal life and felicity.

2. "I am faſtened to the croſs with Jeſus Chriſt," ſaid, St. Paul. It is with our ſaviour we are nailed to the croſs, and it is he who by his grace fixeth us thereunto. It is for the ſake of Jeſus we are unwilling to quit the croſs, becauſe he and the croſs are inſeparable. O adorable and ſuffering body, with whom we make but one and the ſame victim, in giving me your choice, give me alſo your ſpirit of love and ſelf-denial! may the happineſs of ſuffering with you, leſſen in me the ſenſe of my own ſufferings! What do I endure which you have not? Or rather, what can my ſufferings be in compariſon with yours? O cowardly man be ſilent, look on thy divine maſter, and bluſh! Lord cauſe me to love, and I will fear the croſs no more; nay, though I feel what is ſtill more hard and painful, I ſhall endure at leaſt no more than I am willing to undergo!

ELEVENTH

ELEVENTH DAY.

On Meekneſs and Humility.

"LEARN from me, that I am meek and humble of heart." O Jeſus! it is you who ſets me this pattern of meekneſs and humility: whoever beſides ſhould offer to teach it me would make me fly off. I ſhould every where find imperfections, and my pride would not fail taking advantage thereof; it muſt therefore be you yourſelf who is to inſtruct me: But what do I perceive? O my dear maſter, you by your example vouchſafe to inſtruct me! What an authority! I need only be ſilent and adore, be confounded and imitate. What! the ſon of God deſcends from heaven, aſſumes a body of clay, expires on a croſs to make me bluſh at my pride. He who is all, annihilates himſelf, and I who am nothing would be, at leaſt ſeem to be, every thing I am not. O untruth! O folly! O imprudent vanity! O diabolical preſumption! Lord, you ſay not unto me, be meek and humble, but that you are meek and humble. It is ſufficient to know you are ſo, to conclude from ſuch an example, that we ought to be the ſame: who after ſuch an example, ſhall dare to diſpenſe with himſelf? ſhall the ſinner, who for his ingratitude, hath ſo often deſerved to be thunder-ſtruck by your juſtice?

My God you are both meek and humble, becauſe humility is the fountain of true meekneſs. Pride is ever haughty, impatient, and ready to be put upon the fret: whoever deſpiſeth himſelf, is willing to be deſpiſed: whoever believeth there is nothing due to him, never taketh himſelf to be ill uſed. There is no ſuch thing, as meekneſs truly virtuous from temper; it is only eaſineſs, indolence, or artifice; we muſt renounce ourſelves to be meek to others. Thou add'ſt, O Lord! "Meek and humble of heart." This conſiſts not in an humbleneſs, which is only in the mind by reflection. It is a reliſh and ſentiment of the heart; it is an humbleneſs

to which the will conſents, and which ſhe loves for the glory of God. It is a deſtruction of all confidence in our own underſtanding and natural ſtrength, that our cure may be owing to God alone.

TWELFTH DAY.

On the Defects of Others.

"BEAR the burthens of each other, thus ſhall ye fulfill the law of Jeſus Chriſt." Had charity extended ſo far, as to require us, never to ſee the defects of others, our ſight muſt be taken from us. It requireth that we avoid being willingly attentive to them without neceſſity, and that we ſhut not our eyes to what is good, whilſt we are ſo clear ſighted to what is evil. We muſt ever remember what God can every moment make of the moſt vile and unworthy creature; call to mind the reaſons we have to deſpiſe ourſelves and conſider, that charity even embraces what is moſt abject, becauſe ſhe by the ſight of God ſeeth preciſely, that our contempt for others hath ſomething harſh and haughty, which extinguiſheth the ſpirit of Jeſus Chriſt. Grace becomes not blind in regard of what is contemptible but bears with it, that ſhe may enter into the ſecret deſigns of God: ſhe giveth not way, either to diſdainful diſlikes or other natural impatiences. She is not aſtoniſhed at any corruption, nor makes a wonder of any weakneſs, becauſe relying wholly on God, ſhe ſeeth that beſides him, all is nothing and ſin.

2. Is weakneſs in others, a ſufficient reaſon to have leſs regard for them? You who complain of what you are made to ſuffer, think you that none ſuffer by your means? You who are ſo nettled at your neighbours defects, do you take yourſelf to be perfect? What a ſurpriſe would it be to you, ſhould all thoſe upon whom you bear ſo hard, come on a ſudden and lay their weight on you? But grant you find your juſtification on earth, cannot God who is all knowing, and hath ſo many things to reproach you withal, confound and ſilence you with

with one ſingle word, and doth it never enter into you to apprehend his aſking, why you extend not towards your brother a little of that mercy, which he your maſter extendeth ſo abundantly towards you?

THIRTEENTH DAY.

On the only Thing neceſſary.

"YOU hurry yourſelf and are ſollicitous about many things: there is only one thing neceſſary." We fancy we have a thouſand things to do, and we have but one: if that be done, we ſhall find all the others done alſo; if we fail in that one, all others, how ſucceſsful ſo ever they ſeem, ſhall fall to ruin. Why do we then ſo divide our hearts and cares? O only concern on earth! thou ſhall from henceforth poſſeſs my ſoul and whole attention by the ray of divine light; I will (according to the ſtrength of my body) perform continually without uneaſineſs, whatever providence ſhall put me in the way of doing; I will, without concern, abandon the reſt, becauſe they are not my buſineſs.

2. "Celeſtial father, I have finiſhed the work you had given me to do;" each of us ought to put himſelf in a condition to ſay as much, at the day we muſt give an account. I ought to look on what occurs every day by the order of God, as the work wherewith God chargeth me, and apply myſelf thereunto after a manner worthy of God; that is, with quietneſs and exactneſs. I will neglect nothing; I will be paſſionately fixed on nothing; for it is dangerous to do the work of God negligently, or to appropriate the ſame to one's ſelf, through ſelf-love, and a falſe zeal. Our actions are then performed by our private ſpirit, and they are ill done. We labour with might and main, and ſeem reſolved to ſucceed; when the glory of God is the only pretence, which conceals the illuſion. Self-love diſguiſed into zeal, is afflicted and diſmayed if it cannot gain its point. O God grant me grace to be faithful in the action, and indifferent as to the ſucceſs. My buſineſs is only to will

will your will and to gather myſelf up as in you, even in the midſt of what I do; it is yours, to grant to my weak efforts ſuch fruits as you pleaſe; or, if ſuch is your pleaſure no fruit at all.

FOURTEENTH DAY.

On Preparation for Death.

"THOU fool, this night will thy ſoul be redemanded of thee; for whom has thou gathered?" The blindneſs of mankind cannot ſufficiently be lamented, in their unwillingneſs to think of death, and turning aſide from what is inevitable, which might be rendered happy by our thinking of it. To thoſe who are tied to this life, nothing is ſo terrible as death. It is ſtrange that ſo many paſt ages, form not in us a ſolid judgment of the preſent, and that to come, and make us not take greater precaution. We are infatuated with the world as if it never were to have an end. The memory of thoſe (who at this day act the greateſt parts upon this ſtage) ſhall periſh with them. God permits all to be loſt, in the profound abyſs of oblivion, and men more than the reſt: the pyramids of Egypt are yet viſible; yet the name of him who built them is unknown; what then are we doing on earth, and what will the pleaſanteſt life avail, if by prudent and chriſtian means, it conduct us not to a ſweeter and happier death.

2. "Be ready, becauſe at the hour you think not of Jeſus Chriſt the ſon of man ſhall come." This ſaying is perſonally directed to us, of whatſoever age or rank we be. Notwithſtanding which, all people without excepting the good, form projects which ſuppoſe a long life, even when it draws towards its end. If one yet hope for recovery, in the extremity of an incurable diſtemper; what hopes hath not one in full health, or whence proceeds this ſo obſtinate hope of life: but that we paſſionately love it? or from whence cometh our willingneſs to remove the thoughts of death,

death, but that we love not the kingdom of God, nor the greatneſs of the life to come? O mankind heavy of heart, who cannot riſe above the earth, where, by their own confeſſion they are miſerable! The true means of being prepared for the laſt moment, is to employ well all others, and always to expect it.

FIFTEETH DAY.

On eternal Hopes.

"THE eye hath not beheld, nor the ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived, what God hath prepared for them that love him." What proportion, between what we do on earth, and what we hope for in heaven! The primitive chriſtians inceſſantly rejoiced at the proſpect of their hope; they continually thought of ſeeing the heavens open. Croſſes, infamies, puniſhments, cruel deaths; nothing was capable of ſtartling them. They knew the infinite liberality which is to reward ſuch ſufferings. In their own opinion they never ſuffered enough: they were tranſported with joy, whenever they were deemed worthy of ſome profound humiliation; and we cowardly ſouls we cannot bear ſufferings becauſe we know not how to hope! the leaſt croſſes overwhelm us, and often, even thoſe which are cauſed by our pride, our imprudence, and our nicety.

2. "Thoſe who ſow in tears, ſhall gather in joy." We muſt ſow, if we intend to reap, this life is ordained for ſowing, in the other we ſhall enjoy the fruit of our labours. The worldly, cowardly, impatient man is for gathering before he hath ſown. We would have God comfort us, and level the ways to conduct us to him. We would willingly ſerve him, provided it be at ſmall coſt. To hope for much, and endure next to nothing, is where ſelf-love tendeth. Blind that we are, ſhall we never perceive, that the kingdom of God ſuffers violence, and that none but ſouls reſolute, and couragious in overcoming themſelves

ſelves, are worthy of the conqueſt. Let us weep on earth, ſince happy are thoſe who weep, and unhappy thoſe who rejoice. Wo unto thoſe, whoſe comfort is in this world; the time will come, when theſe vain joys ſhall be confounded. The world ſhall weep in its turn, and God ſhall wipe the tears from off our eyes.

SIXTEENTH DAY.

On our daily Bread.

"GIVE us this day our daily bread." What, O my God, is this bread? It is not only that ſuſtenance which your providence giveth us for the neceſſity of life; it is alſo that nouriſhment of truth, which you each day give unto the ſoul: it is a bread which nouriſheth for eternal life, which improveth and fortifieth the ſoul in trials of faith, and you renew it daily. You give preciſely, both inwardly and outwardly, what is requiſite for the ſoul's increaſe in faith, and ſelf-denial. I need therefore only eat this bread, and receive in ſpirit of ſacrifice, whatever bitters you ſhall give me in exterior affairs, as well as at heart. For whatever happens to me in the courſe of the day, is my daily bread, provided I refuſe not accepting it from your hand, and nouriſhing myſelf there withal.

2. Hunger giveth a reliſh to food, and rendereth it beneficial. Why do we not hunger and thirſt after juſtice? Why have not our ſouls a languiſhing hunger and thirſt like our bodies? A man who hath loſt his appetite, and can take no food, is ſick. Thus doth our ſoul languiſh when it ſeeketh not to be either filled or ſupported with what cometh from God. Truth and juſtice are the food of the ſoul, and that celeſtial bread we muſt feed on, conſiſts in knowing good, and being therewith repleniſhed and fortified. Let us therefore eat thereof; let us be greedy for it; let us appear before God like poor beggars, and wait for a little bread. Let us be ſenſible of our weakneſs and defects. Unhappy we, if the ſenſe thereof be loſt in us!

Let

Let us read and pray with that hungry deſire of nouriſhing our ſouls with that ardent thirſt of refreſhing it with the water that ſprings up even into heaven. A great and conſtant deſire of inſtruction, is the only means by which we can become worthy of diſcovering the wonders of the law of God; each one receiveth this ſacred bread according to the proportion of his deſire, and thereby diſpoſeth himſelf to receive often and devoutly the ſubſtantial bread of the Euchariſt with that ſpirit which preſerveth and increaſeth life.

SEVENTEENTH DAY.

On the Peace of the Soul.

"I Leave my peace with you, I give you my peace not as the world giveth it." All mankind ſearch for peace where it is not to be found. That peace which the world giveth hopes of, is as different and remote from that which cometh from God, as God himſelf is different and remote from the world, or rather the world promiſeth and never giveth peace. It makes a tender of ſome fleeting pleaſures, which coſt more than they are worth. It is Jeſus Chriſt alone who can put man in peace: he maketh him conſiſtent with himſelf; he makes his paſſions ſubmit to him, ſets bounds to his deſires, refreſhes him by hope of eternal happineſs, gives him the comfort of the Holy Ghoſt, and makes him reliſh interior joy even in pains. And, as the fountain from whence this peace is produced cannot dry up, as alſo, the bottom of the ſoul where it reſideth, is inacceſſible to the malignity of mankind, it becometh for the juſt a treaſure which none can rob them of.

2. True peace conſiſts only in the poſſeſſion of God: and the poſſeſſing God upon earth, is only found in ſubmiſſion to faith, and obedience to the law. The one and the other maintain in the bottom of the heart, a love pure and without mixture. Remove all prohibited objects, retrench all unlawful deſires, baniſh all hurry and diſquiet; let God be your only deſire, ſeek only him,

him, and you ſhall taſte peace; you ſhall reliſh it in ſpite of the world. Doth poverty, contempt, ill-ſucceſs, interior and exterior croſſes diſturb you? look on all theſe in the hand of God, as true favours which he diſtributes to his friends, and whereof he vouchſafeth to make you a partaker. Then the world will appear unto you with a different face, and nothing ſhall rob you of the peace you enjoy.

EIGHTEENTH DAY.

On deceitful Joys.

"I Have looked on laughter as a dream, and I have ſaid unto mirth, why doſt thou deceive me." The rejoicings of the world can only be compared to the ravings of ſick folks, or agreeable dreams of thoſe who ſleep. There is no likelihood of finding ſolidity, when one is wedded to a vain painting, to a hollow image, to a flying ſhaddow, to a paſſing figure. We rejoice, becauſe we are deceived, becauſe we fancy we poſſeſs a great deal, even when we poſſeſs nothing. At the awake of death, we ſhall find our hands empty, and be aſhamed of our joy. Wo unto thoſe who in this world have a falſe comfort, which exclude them from the true one. Let us ſay conſtantly to the vain and inſipid joy which the age inſpireth, Why doſt thou ſo groſly deceive me? Nothing is worthy of inſpiring joy, but our bleſſed hopes. All is a meer dream, which is not founded thereon.

2. "Whoſoever drinketh of this water, ſhall yet thirſt." The more one drinketh of the corrupted waters of the age, the more one hath thirſt. Diſquieting deſires ſtill encreaſe in the heart in proportion as one plungeth into evil. The poſſeſſion of riches only provoketh thirſt. Avarice and ambition, are more diſcontented for what they yet do not enjoy, than contented with what they poſſeſs. The enjoyment of pleaſures only ſoftens the ſoul, corrupts her and renders her inſatiable. The more one indulges, the more willing one is to do ſo. It is eaſier to retain one's heart in a ſtate

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of fervour and repentance, than to bring it back, or ſtop it, when it is once on the bent of pleaſure and relaxation. Let us be watchful therefore over ourſelves. Let us beware of drinking a water which encreaſeth thirſt. Let us preſerve our heart with precaution, leſt the world and its vain comforts ſeduce it, and leave us nothing at laſt but deſpair, for having deceived ourſelves.

NINETEENTH DAY.

On Holy Tears.

"HAPPY are thoſe who weep, becauſe they ſhall be comforted." What new ſort of tears are thoſe, ſaith St. Auguſtine, which render thoſe happy who ſhed them? This happineſs conſiſts in being afflicted in bewailing the corruption of the world, which environs us, and the ſnares with which we are ſurrounded: the inexhauſtible fund of corruption, which lieth in the centre of our hearts: the fear of loſing the love of God; the fear of ſtraying from the narrow way. Such were the ſubject of the Saints-tears: 'tis difficult to rejoice, when one is in danger of loſing the moſt precious thing one is poſſeſſed of, and of loſing one's ſelf. It is impoſſible not to be afflicted, when all one ſees is but vanity, ſtraying, ſcandal, forgetfulneſs and contempt of the God we ſhould love. Let us then weep at the proſpect of ſo many ſubjects for tears. God will rejoice at our affliction. The inſpiration is from himſelf: the love of him cauſes our tears to flow: he himſelf will come to wipe them off.

2. We hear Jeſus Chriſt ſaying, "Wo unto you who laugh," yet we will laugh. We hear him ſay, "Wo unto you rich whoſe comfort is in this world," Yet we continually and eagerly ſeek after riches. He ſaith, "Bleſſed are thoſe who weep," yet we apprehend nothing ſo much as weeping. We muſt bewail here on earth, not only the danger of our condition, but all that is vain and irregular. All we perceive within and without, is only affliction of ſpirit, temptation and ſin; all is

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to be lamented. To love those things so little worthy of our love, is real unhappiness. How many reasons for lamenting! It is the best we can do. Happy tears which proceed from grace, which give us a dislike of passing things, and which produce in us the desire of eternal happiness!

TWENTIETH DAY.

On worldly Prudence.

"THE prudence of the flesh, is death to the soul." The prudence of the children of the world must be great, since Jesus Christ assureth us of it in the gospel, and is often even greater than that of the children of God: but in it is found a dreadful defect, notwithstanding all its spacious appearances; for it killeth all those who take it for their rule of life. That crooked prudence made up of craft and artifice, is opposite to that of God, which ever moveth in uprightness and simplicity: but of what use are all their talents to the prudent ones of the age, since at last they find themselves taken in their own snares. St. James the apostle nameth this prudence, "Earthly, animal, and diabolical." Earthly, because the extent of its cares, are the acquisition and possession of the goods of the earth. Animal, because its only intent is to furnish mankind with all that indulgeth their passions and to plunge them in sensual pleasures. Diabolical, because being endued with all the spirit and penetration of the devil; it has likewise all his malice. With it one imagineth to deceive all others, and none is deceived but one's self.

2. The only wisdom worthy of the name is that of Jesus Christ. Therefore all are blind who fancy themselves wise, without it. They pursue phantoms in the dark. They are like to those, who take themselves to be awake in a dream, and fancy all the objects to be real. Such are all the great of the earth, all the sages of the age, all that are enchanted with false pleasures; only the

the children of God move towards the rays of pure truth. What can men full of vain and ambitious thoughts expect? Often diſgrace, always death, the judgment of God and eternity. Behold the mighty objects, which appear and preſent themſelves to thoſe prophane men! Notwithſtanding they perceive them not; their policy foreſees all excepting the downfal, and unavoidable deſtruction of all they ſeek for. O madmen when will you open your eyes to the light of Jeſus Chriſt, which will diſcover unto you, that all the grandeurs on earth are a meer nothing.

TWENTY-FIRST DAY.

On Confidence in God.

"IT is better to place one's truſt in God than in man." You every day confide in weak friends, in unknown men, in unfaithful ſervants, yet you are afraid to confide in God. A writing executed by a man in publick authority ſets you at reſt as to your temporal concerns: yet you rely not on the eternal goſpel; you believe the promiſes of the world: God ſwears unto you and it is with difficulty you believe him. What diſhonour to God! what unhappineſs to you! Let us reduce things into order; let us with moderation do all that in us lieth: let us (without preſcribing limits) expect what depends on God. Let us ſuppreſs all hurry of paſſion, all uneaſineſs diſguiſed under the title of reaſon and zeal: who acteth thus eſtabliſheth himſelf in God, and becometh immoveable as mount Sion.

2. Our confidence of ſalvation, ought to be yet more elevated and aſſured. "By the aſſiſtance of him who ſtrengtheneth me I can do all." When I believed myſelf able to do every thing I could do nothing: And at preſent, when I take myſelf to be capable of doing nothing, I begin to be able to do all. Happy inability which maketh me, O my God! find in you all that was wanting in myſelf. I glory in my infirmities and

and the misfortunes of my life, ſince they undeceive me of the whole world and myſelf. I ought to eſteem myſelf happy in being cruſhed by ſo merciful a hand, ſince in this annihilation I ſhall be endued with your ſtrength, ſkreened under your wings, and environed with that ſpecial protection, which you extend over your humble children, who place their entire confidence in you.

TWENTY-SECOND DAY.

On the Depth of the Mercy of God.

"HOW vaſt is the mercy of the Lord." It is an aſſured refuge for all who turn towards it. Why do we delay caſting ourſelves into the depth of this abyſs? The more we loſe ourſelves therein, with confidence full of love, the more we ſhall be in a ſtate of ſalvation. Let us give curſelves to God without reſerve, and fear nothing: he will love us, and we ſhall love him: his love each day increaſing, will ſtand in lieu of all the reſt. He alone will repleniſh our Hearts, which the world had beſotted, and diſturbed, without being ever able to content it. We ſhall only part with what maketh us unhappy. We ſhall only be made to deſpiſe the world, which we do perhaps already: we ſhall only be made to do moſt things we now do; but, which are ill done, whereas in being referred to him, they will prove all well done, even the leaſt action of ſimple and common life, will turn to comfort and reward. We ſhall ſee in peace the approach of death; it will to us become a beginning of immortal life. Far from ſtripping us; it will, as St. Paul ſaith, "cloathe us, and we ſhall then diſcover the depth of the mercies, which God exerciſeth over our ſouls."

2. Reflect in the preſence of God on the effects of this infinite mercy, on thoſe you already have knowledge of, on the lights beſtowed on you by Jeſus Chriſt, on the good ſentiments he hath inſpired you with

with, on the ſins he hath forgiven you, on the ſnares of the world from which he hath protected you, on the extraordinary aſſiſtance he hath diſpenſed to you: endeavour to be moved by the remembrance of all thoſe precious marks of his bounty; add thereunto the thoughts of croſſes wherewith he hath laden you for your ſanctification; for they alſo are riches which he hath drawn from the depth of his treaſures, and you ought to conſider them as ſignal teſtimonies of his love. Let the acknowledgment for what is paſſed, inſpire you with a confidence of what's to come. Fearful ſoul be perſuaded that he hath too much love for you, not to continue it. Let your diffidence be of yourſelf, not of him: remember (as ſaith the apoſtle) "That he is the father of mercies, and God of all comfort." He ſometimes ſeparates theſe two. Comfort withdraws, but mercy endureth for ever. He hath deprived you of what was mild, and ſenſible in his grace, becauſe you required being humbled and puniſhed, for having elſewhere ſought vain comforts. This chaſtiſement is alſo a new depth of his divine mercy.

TWENTY-THIRD DAY.

On the Sweetneſs of the Yoke of Jeſus Chriſt.

"MY yoke is ſweet and my burden is light." Let not the name of yoke terrify us. We bear the weight of it, but God beareth it with us, and more than we do, becauſe it is a yoke to be borne by two, and that it is his and not ours. Jeſus Chriſt inſpireth love for this yoke: he maketh it eaſy by the interior charm of juſtice and truth. He ſprinkleth his chaſte delights on Virtues, and rendereth falſe pleaſures loathſome. He upholdeth man againſt himſelf, draweth him forcibly from his original corruption, and rendereth him ſtrong, notwithſtanding his weakneſs. O man of little faith, what fear you! leave all to God, abandon yourſelf to him: you ſuffer, but it is with love and peace: you fight, but you gain the victory,

tory, and God himſelf, after having fought in your favour, will crown you with his own hand. You weep, but your tears will be ſweet, and God himſelf will come with pleaſure to wipe them off. No longer will you be permitted to abandon yourſelf to any tyrannical paſſions, but by a voluntary ſacrifice of your liberty, you find (in lieu thereof) another unknown to the world, and more precious than all the power of kings.

2. What blindneſs to apprehend being too deeply engaged with God. Let us plunge into his boſom; the more one loves him, the more alſo will one love all he enjoineth. This love it is, that comforts us in our loſſes, that ſweeteneth our croſſes, that taketh us off from all that is dangerous to love, that preſerveth us from a thouſand poiſons, that diſcovereth a well doing mercy through all the evils we endure, that in death itſelf, reveals unto us an eternal glory and felicity. How can we apprehend being too much repleniſhed with it? Is being diſcharged of the heavy yoke of the world, and carrying the light burden of Jeſus Chriſt an unhappineſs? Do we fear being too happy, too much freed from the whims of our pride, from the violence of our paſſions, and from the tyranny of a deceitful age?

TWENTY-FOURTH DAY.

On miſtaken Liberty.

"WHereſoever is the ſpirit of the Lord, there alſo is liberty." The love of liberty is one of the moſt dangerous paſſions of the heart of man; and the effect of this paſſion (as of all others) is, that it deceiveth all thoſe whom it governs, and inſtead of liberty, they by it endure the ſevereſt and moſt ſhameful ſlavery. What call you the ſeveral occurrences of life! What are you not obliged to bear to gain the eſteem of thoſe men you ſo much deſpiſe! What does it not coſt you, when your paſſions run too great a length, to gratify thoſe, you are willing to yield to, to conceal your

your afflictions, to get over perplexing and troublesome appearances! where is then the ſo much beloved liberty, and which you with ſo much difficlty ſacrifice unto God? Where is it? Do but ſhew it me? I every where perceive nothing but conſtraint, mean, and baſe ſlavery, a deplorable neceſſity of diſguiſe. We refuſe ourſelves unto God, who is willing to receive us purely for our ſalvation, and deliver ourſelves up to the world, that is willing, only to tyrannize over and deſtroy us.

2. People fancy they do juſt as they pleaſe in the world, becauſe they reliſh the taſte of their paſſions, by which they are borne away; but let us attend to the terrible diſtaſte, the mortal uneaſineſs, the diſappointments inſeparable from pleaſures, and the humiliations one muſt go through, even in the higheſt ſtations. All is mingled both exteriorly, and interiorly with vexation and anxiety. We think ourſelves to be free, when our dependence is only on ourſelves. Fooliſh miſtake! Is there a ſtate, where we depend not on as many maſters as there are perſons with whom we have concern? Is there one, wherein we depend not even more on the fancies of others than our own. All the ſociety of life, is only conſtrained by being captives to good breeding, and under a neceſſity of pleaſing others. Our paſſions alſo are worſe than the crueleſt enemy: if we give ourſelves unto them but by halves, we muſt every hour be at jars, and not have one breathing minute. They betray themſelves, gnaw the heart, trample on laws of honour and reaſon, and never are ſatisfied: Where will this torrent lead, if one abandons himſelf intirely. It is with horror, I reflect on it. Preſerve me O my God! from this diſmal ſlavery; which human inſolence is not aſhamed of calling liberty. It is in you alone we are free: it is your truth that ſhall deliver us and make known unto us by experience, that to ſerve you is to reign.

TWENTY-

TWENTY-FIFTH DAY.

On a fixed Reſolution of ſerving God.

"LORD what will you have me to do." Thus ſaid St. Paul, when miraculouſly caſt down, by the grace of that ſaviour whom he proſecuted. Alas! to what degree have we perſecuted him by our infidelities, our humours, our paſſions, which in our heart have diſturbed the work of his mercy? he hath indeed caſt us down by tribulation, cruſhed our pride, confounded our worldly prudence, and put our ſelf-love into conſternation. Let us then ſay unto him with intire reſignation, "Lord, what will you have me do;" until now my converſion unto you has been but imperfect; I made uſe of a thouſand delays, and endeavoured to ſave and carry off all that was poſſible for me, from the wreck of my converſion; but I am at preſent ready to give up all, and you ſhall become the abſolute maſter of my heart and conduct.

2. An univerſal offer is nevertheleſs inſufficient: It will come to nothing, if it remain wavering and uncertain, and deſcend not to particulars and to practice. "Too long (ſaith St. Auguſtine) have I indulged an unſettled and feeble will for God." To be deſirous of perfection coſts us nothing, if we do nothing for it; we muſt therefore deſire it more than all the deareſt temporal things, and thoſe we moſt eagerly purſue, and muſt not be unwilling to do leſs for God than we have done for the world. Let us ſearch into the bottom of our heart. Am I determined to ſacrifice to God my ſtrongeſt friendſhips: my habits which have taken the deepeſt root, my predominant inclinations, my moſt agreeable amuſements.

TWENTY-

TWENTY-SIXTH DAY.

On the Capitulation one would make with God.

"HOW long will you halt on two ſides? None can ſerve two maſters." We know very well that to be ſaved, we muſt ſerve God and love him: but we would willingly take off from his ſervice and his love all that is burdenſome, and leave therein only what is agreeable. We would ſerve him, provided we gave him but bare words and ceremonies, and even ſhort ones, which ſoon become tireſome, and tedious to us. We would love him, provided we might love at the ſame time (and that perhaps more than him) all that he loveth not and condemneth in the vanities of the world. We would love him, provided we diminiſhed none of that blind ſelf-love, which reacheth even to idolatry, and which is the cauſe that inſtead of referring ourſelves unto God, as unto him for whom we are made; we on the contrary would refer God to ourſelves, and only ſeek him as a refuge for our comfort, when creatures fail us. We would ſerve and love him, provided it ſhould be permitted us to be out of countenance at his love, to conceal it as a frailty, to be aſhamed of him as of a friend unworthy of love, to pay him only ſome exterior of religion for avoiding ſcandal, but live at the diſcretion of the world, that we may offer nothing to God, but with leave of the world itſelf. What ſervice and what love!

2. God admits of no other compact with us, but what hath reference to our firſt alliance in baptiſm, where we have promiſed to renounce all, in order to be intirely his; and to the firſt commandment of his law, where he requireth without any reſerve, all our heart, all our ſpirit, and all our ſtrength. Can we in effect ſincerely love God, and have ſo much deference for his enemy the world, on which he hath pronounced ſo many terrible maledictions? Can we love God, and apprehend knowing him too well, for fear of making too large a ſacrifice? Can we love God, and reſt contented in not affronting him without any con-

cern of pleaſing him, of glorifying him, and of teſtifying courageouſly the ardor and ſincerity of our love, in all occaſions which daily occur? God giveth himſelf unto us without either limitation or reſerve, and we would inſiſt on a thouſand from him. Are there on earth creatures vile enough to be ſatisfied with our loving them in this manner? Yet we are not aſhamed of it, and ſeem willing that God ſhould be ſatisfied with our loving him in this limited manner.

TWENTY-SEVENTH DAY.

On the well employing of our Time.

"LET us do good whilſt we have time: a night will come, wherein no one will be able to work." Time is precious but we are ignorant of its value: this we ſhall know, when there will no longer be room to make our profit of it. Our friends demand it of us as a trifle, and we beſtow it accordingly. It often is a burden to us, and coſts us ſome pains to know how to diſpoſe of it. A day will come when a quarter of an hour will appear of more eſteem, and more deſireable than all the riches of the univerſe. God, who in all other things, is liberal and magnificent, teacheth us by the wiſe œconomy of his providence, how circumſpect we ought to be in the good uſe of time, ſince he never granteth us two inſtants at once; and he granteth the ſecond by withdrawing the firſt, and retaining the third in his hand; the enjoyment of which is intirely uncertain. Time is given us to provide for eternity, and an eternity will not be too long, for lamenting the loſs of time, if we happen to miſpend it.

2. Our whole life belongeth to God, as well as our whole heart: the one and the other are not too much for him; he hath given them us for no other end, but to love and ſerve him: let us rob him of nothing in either. Great things are not every moment in our power; but we can always do what is proper in our ſtation.

ſtation. Our being ſilent, our ſuffering, our praying, when we cannot act exteriorly, is offering a great deal to God. A diſappointment, a contradiction, a murmur, an importunity, an injuſtice received, and patiently taken, are in the ſight of God well worth half an hour's prayer, and time is not loſt, when in the loſing we practiſe meekneſs and patience. But then this muſt be a loſs of neceſſity, and not occaſioned by our own fault. Thus regulate your days and redeem time, as St. Paul ſays, "In flying the world and abandoning unto it thoſe goods which are not worth the time they take from us." Quit the amuſements, the idle correſpondence, the inclinations of the heart, which indulge ſelf-love, and converſations which diſſipate the mind, and tend to nothing. You will find time for God, and nothing is well employed, but what is employed for him.

TWENTY-EIGHTH DAY.

On the Preſence of God.

"WALK in my preſence and be perfect." Thus Lord did you ſay unto the faithful Abraham; and indeed, who ever walketh in your preſence, is in the way to perfection. They ſtray from this holy way, only when they loſe ſight of you, and ceaſe to ſeek you in all they do. Alas! where do I go, when I ſee you no more, you who are my light, and the only end where unto my paces are deſigned? The means never to ſtray, is to conſider you in all the ſteps we make. O reſplendent faith in the midſt of darkneſs, which environs us! O proſpect full of confidence and of love, which leadeth man to perfection! O God, I ſee but you! it is you only I ſeek, and conſider in all my eyes ſeem to behold.

The order of your providence is what attracts my attention. My heart only awakes for you in the multitude of affairs, obligations, and thoughts wherewith I am taken up, becauſe they only employ me to obey

your orders: thus do I endeavour to re-unite all my attention in you, O ſovereign and only object of my heart! when even I am neceſſitated to divide my care, purſuant to the laws of your divine will. What could I ſee in theſe vile creatures, had you ceaſed applying me to them, and I ceaſed ſeeing you in them?

2. I am then reſolved to hold my eyes raiſed towards the holy mountains from whence I expect all my ſtrength, and all my aſſiſtance. In vain ſhould I depend on my feet, for my deliverance from the innumerable ſnares wherewith I am ſurrounded. Danger cometh from below, but deliverance can only come from above. It is there my eyes are raiſed to ſee you. All upon earth is enſnaring to me, within and without; all without you, Lord, is a ſnare; towards you alone my eyes and heart bear. I will ſee only you; in you only do I hope. My enemies beſiege me without intermiſſion. I am terrified by my own weakneſs; but you have made conqueſt of the world for you and for me, and your omnipotent ſtrength will uphold my infirmity.

TWENTY-NINTH DAY.

On the Love God hath for us.

"I Have loved you with an eternal love." God waited not our being ſome thing to love us. Before all ages, and even before we had our preſent being, he thought of us, and thought only to do us good.

What he meditated from eternity, he executed in its time. His bountiful hand hath diffuſed all ſorts of bleſſings on us. Even neither our infidelities nor our ingratitudes, as numberleſs almoſt as his favours, have not yet been able to dry up the fountain of his gifts, nor ſtop the courſe of his graces. O love without any beginning, which hath loved me during infinite ages, and even when I neither could be ſenſible of it, nor acknowledge it! O love without meaſure, which

which hath made me what I am, which hath given me what I have; and which alſo promiſeth me infinitely more! O love without interruption, and without inconſtancy, which all the bitter waters of my iniquities could not quench! Have I a heart O my God! If I be not pierced with gratitude and tenderneſs for you?

2. But what do I ſee? A God who even after having given all, giveth himſelf. A God who cometh to ſeek me even from nothing, becauſe my ſin hath ſunk me ſo low. A God who taketh the form of a ſlave, to deliver me from the ſlavery of my enemies. A God who maketh himſelf poor to enrich me. A God who calleth me, and purſueth me when I fly. A God who expireth in torments, to force me from the arms of death, and to give me in lieu thereof a happy life: yet I often both refuſe him and the life he offers. What would one think a man to be, who ſhould love another, as God loveth us; and of what curſes do not thoſe become unworthy, who after all ſhall not love the Lord Jeſus Chriſt?

THIRTIETH DAY.

On the Love we ought to have for God.

"WHAT have I to deſire in heaven, and what can I love on earth," if it be not you, O my God! When we ſay to God that we love him with all our heart, it is often a ſpeech, a diſcourſe, without reality. We have been ſo taught to ſay in our infancy, and we continue it, when we are grown up without often knowing what we ſay. To love God is to have no other will but his; to obſerve faithfully his holy law; to have horror for ſin. To love God, is to love what Jeſus Chriſt loved, poverty, humiliations, ſufferings; to hate what Jeſus Chriſt hath hated, the world, vanity, paſſions. Can it be believed that we love an object, we would not reſemble? To love God is to converſe willingly with him: to deſire

going to him: to ſigh and languiſh for him. O falſe love that careth not to ſee what one loveth!

2. The ſaviour is come to bring a divine fire upon the earth, and his deſire is, that this fire burn and conſume all. Men live nevertheleſs in a mortal coldneſs. They love a little metal, a houſe, a name, an airy title, a chimera, which they call reputation. They love a converſation, an amuſement which vaniſheth from them. There is but God, for whom they have no love left: all is exhauſted for the moſt deſpiſeable creatures. Shall we never be willing to taſte the happineſs of divine love? Until when ſhall we prefer the unhappineſs of loving the moſt envenomed creatures? O God! Reign over us, notwithſtanding our infidelities. Let the fire of your love extinguiſh all other: what can we ſee worthy of love out of you, which we find not again perfectly in you, who are the fountain of all good? Grant us grace to love you; we no longer will love any but you, and our love ſhall be eternal.

THIRTY-FIRST DAY.

On the Sentiments of Divine Love.

O God of my heart, O God, my eternal inheritance! Can we know you, O my God! and not love you? you who ſurpaſs in beauty, in virtue, in grandeur, in power, in goodneſs, in liberality, in magnificence, in all ſorts of perfections, and (what concerneth me nearer) in love for me, and in all that created ſpirits can comprehend. The reſpect and inequality between you and me, ought ſeemingly to prevent me, but you give me leave; that is ſaying too little, you command me to love you. After that, Lord! I no longer know myſelf, I poſſeſs myſelf no more. O ſacred love which hath wounded my love, and which with your own darts, has wounded yourſelf for me! Come my cure, or come rather to make the wound, you have given me, deeper and more ſenſible!

ſenſible! Separate me from all creatures, they annoy me, they are troubleſome; you alone ſuffice me, and I will have no other than you.

2. What! ſhall it be ſaid, that the nonſenſical lovers of the earth, carry their fooliſh paſſions to an exceſs of delicacy and ardor, and you be loved but ſlightly and after a manner? No, no, my God it muſt not be, that prophane love ſhall emulate or exceed the divine love. Make known your power on the heart that is all yours. The acceſs to it is free for you: the ſprings of it are known to you; you know what your grace is capable of ſtirring up in me. You want only my conſent, and the ſubmiſſion of my liberty. A thouſand and a thouſand times do I give you the one and the other: take all: act as God: take me in your arms: conſume me. Weak and impotent creature that I am, I have nothing to give you but my love. Increaſe Lord and make it more worthy of you. O that I were capable of doing great things for you! That I had a great deal to ſacrifice to you! But all I can is nothing: to ſigh, to languiſh, to love, and to die, is from hence forward all I deſire.

The END *of* PART II.

Part 3

28 SE00

Part 3d

SOME NECESSARY

CONSIDERATIONS

ON THE

IMPORTANCE

Of the following

CHRISTIAN DUTIES.

AMONG the many worthy attempts that have been made to retrieve the piety and devotion of the primitive times, the promoting frequent communion has had no inconsiderable influence; and as this ancient practice recovers its true perfection, we may reasonably expect, that the wonderful effects of it will appear in the lives and converſation of chriſtians.

The duty itſelf ſeems at preſent much better underſtood than it was formerly, when many very unwary diſcourſes upon the ſubject, rather diſcouraged than excited men to the performance of it. The preparation was looked upon as ſo difficult and burdenſome, and ſo great a perfection of piety required in the receivers, that all ſincere beginners in religion were inclined to think, that the ſacred inſtitution no ways related to them; and men of buſineſs, though otherwiſe very ſerious, were of opinion, that more retirement was neceſſary than they could ſpare, and that not being able to prepare themſelves properly, they altogether laid aſide the duty, and reſerved the holy communion for their viaticum in their laſt hours; which, though an admirable means to ſettle and ſecure the pardon and peace of ſuch penitent ſouls as have frequented the altar in the time of their health and vigour; yet it is to be feared,

will

will but little avail thoſe who have wilfully neglected it all along in life.

Now, if chriſtians did but ſeriouſly conſider, that the beſt preparation for celebrating the holy myſteries conſiſted in a conſtant care to govern their lives by the precepts of the goſpel; and that it was ſufficient if they approached the Lord's table with honeſt and devout minds, heartily and ſincerely reſolving to amend their lives, and truly willing and deſirous to uſe all means to become better; it is impoſſible, if mens minds were poſſeſſed with this right notion of the matter, and that they really deſigned to be true to their chriſtian profeſſions, but that they ſhould embrace all opportunities of receiving the holy ſacrament, and lament every reaſonable cauſe of their abſence, as a great misfortune; becauſe it is the beſt means to enable them to diſcharge their duty. And indeed, the religion we live by, is the religion we muſt receive by; though the method many men take upon theſe occaſions, tempt one to believe that they think there is a great difference between them.

For our part, we could never diſcover any duty, ſuppoſing one inſtructed in the nature of this holy action, that a man was obliged to, before receiving the holy communion, that was not his duty ſome time or other, though he forbore communicating. For the holy ſacrament does not ſo much oblige us to new duties, as enable us to make good thoſe obligations which the profeſſion of chriſtianity has already laid upon us.

They that are acquainted with eccleſiaſtical hiſtory, know very well, that the euchariſt in the pureſt ages of the church, made a part of their daily publick ſervice; and when the devotion of chriſtians began to decline, they yet always upon the Lord's-day, celebrated the chriſtian ſervice. Our ſecond ſervice at the altar ſeems defective without a conformable practice to antiquity in this point, and the holy exerciſes of the Lord's-day appear to want their due perfection without theſe euchariſtical

tical devotions. To this purpoſe our church has encouraged a conſtant weekly communion, by permitting it to be celebrated where three or four perſons are ready and willing to communicate; as being aſſured by our ſaviour, that where two or three are gathered together in his name, there he is himſelf in the midſt of them. And if the parochial miniſter ſhould begin with ſuch a ſmall number, it is likely they would quickly increaſe, at leaſt it will demonſtrate his own zeal to ſhew forth the Lord's death, and may bring a bleſſing upon his pariſh, as well as upon the other labours of his holy function.

Rubrick after Communion.

This chriſtian inſtitution was ordained, not only to put us in mind of thoſe great bleſſings which our ſaviour purchaſed for us by his death; for what man that reflects upon his chriſtianity, can eaſily forget them? But it was alſo eſtabliſhed as a ſacred rite to ſupplicate God the Father by the merits of our ſaviour's paſſion, repreſenting to him the ſymbols of his body and blood, that thereby he may become favourable and propitious to us. This ſenſe of it is agreeable to the holy ſcriptures, as they were underſtood by thoſe who lived nigheſt to the times of the apoſtles.

We are very ſenſible this ſubject has exerciſed the pens of many learned and devout perſons, and though we abound with diſcourſes upon the argument of preparation, wherein the ſubſtance of practical divinity is introduced, as if it was only neceſſary at ſuch times, yet it may be ſaid with good reaſon that we cannot exceed in multiplying books upon the devotional part; the tempers and apprehenſions of men being ſo different, that what does not affect one, may touch another; and ſo that ſubſtantial piety and devotion admit of improvement, too many inſtruments cannot be employed in advancing them.

The moſt proper preparation for communion, in the opinion of the moſt eminent divines, ſhould be grounded on a ſtrict examination of the ſtate of our conſcience, and an humble acknowledgment of our ſins, accompanied

ed with a ſincere and hearty contrition. It is therefore this method has been adopted in its due extent: and as confirmation is alſo deemed a prerequiſite to communion, it was thought neceſſary to begin with ſome inſtructions for that purpoſe.

Inſtructions and Prayers for Confirmation.

CONfirmation is in purſuance of the great vow we made at our baptiſm. The practice of it is as ancient as the days of the apoſtles: St. Paul laid his hands on the baptized at Epheſus, and confirmed them. Acts xix. 6.

Though the Samaritans had been converted and baptized by Philip the deacon, they did not receive the Holy Ghoſt, till St. Peter, and St. John had confirmed them. Acts viii. 14. Tertullian, who lived in the ſecond century, ſays, that they laid on hands after baptiſm, to invite the Holy Ghoſt. St. Cyprian has theſe words, "Upon thoſe who have been baptized in the church, the Holy Ghoſt is invocated and poured out, prayer being made over them, and hands laid upon them." It is an apoſtolical rite, and therefore with good reaſon practiſed in the church of England, which has a juſt veneration for all ancient and good cuſtoms. Calvin alſo commendeth the uſe of it, and has ſpoken much in its favour; and yet, alas! it is too much neglected to the grief of all good men. It is certainly a great ſin to deſpiſe it, or wilfully to neglect it, becauſe it conduceth to the increaſe of chriſtian piety, as procuring the holy ſpirit to aſſiſt us in our duty. It confutes the Anabaptiſts in their clamouring againſt us for baptizing children before they come to years of underſtanding. For we have baptiſm to ſecure us in caſe of death; and confirmation is the ſame ſecurity they pretend to, who defer it till riper years. If you are a godfather, be careful to diſcharge the obligation you have entered into; and let young perſons read over often the office of baptiſm and confirmation.

When

When therefore children, having been ſolemnly dedicated to God in baptiſm, and their names written in the book of life, come to years of diſcretion, and a fit capacity of profeſſing their faith; their godfathers and godmothers ought to bring them to the biſhop to be confirmed by him: to the intent, that in the preſence of God and the congregation, they may renew the ſolemn promiſe and vow, that was made in their name, at their baptiſm. Confirmation puts us in mind how ſhameful it is to diſhonour the chriſtian name, when we have openly in the church declared our reſolution to live and die in the faith of Chriſt. If all who have been baptiſed, and could give an account and reaſon of their faith, were then preſented to the biſhop for confirmation, and would conſent to the promiſe their ſureties made, and vows through God's help to perform the ſame, this would draw down the aſſiſtance of God's holy ſpirit, diſpoſe them to remember their creator in the days of their youth, and enable them to grow in grace, and perſevere in a godly and chriſtian courſe unto their lives end.

A Prayer before Confirmation, to be uſed by thoſe that are preparing for it.

MOST merciful God, by whoſe gracious providence I was born of chriſtian parents, and early dedicated to thee in holy baptiſm; make me thoroughly ſenſible, I beſeech thee, of thy infinite goodneſs in beſtowing upon me the bleſſed privileges of being made a member of thy church, a child of God, and an inheriter of the kingdom of heaven.

Grant, O Lord, that by the aſſiſtance of thy grace, I may carefully and zealouſly perform all thoſe conditions, upon which thou waſt pleaſed

to

to vouchſafe to me ſuch ineſtimable benefits, that I may conſtantly reſiſt the devil and all thoſe temptations by which he ſeeks to deſtroy me: that I may renounce all covetous deſires of honour, riches, and pleaſure, and all thoſe evil cuſtoms and maxims of the world, which alienate mens minds from the love of God; that I may mortify the inordinate appetites of my own corrupt nature, of my own carnal mind; that I may believe all thy holy revelations, and keep thy bleſſed will and commandments all the days of my life.

And now, O Lord, that I am about to renew the ſolemn vow of my baptiſm, and publickly in thy preſence to ratify all thoſe things I then promiſed by my ſecurities; I humbly beſeech thee to enlighten my mind with the knowledge and underſtanding of that ſolemn engagement I then made, and am now about to confirm; influence my will, and all the faculties of my ſoul, heartily and ſincerely to perform it. Let not the many and grievous ſins I have committed, deprive me of thoſe aſſiſtances of thy holy Spirit, which I now expect to receive; but, on my true repentance, let the precious blood of my ſaviour, waſh away all may paſt ſins, and grant that I may be enabled to mortify and ſubdue them for the time to come. And foraſmuch as without thee, I am not able to pleaſe thee, pour thy holy Spirit into my heart, that by his holy inſpiration I may think thoſe things which are good, and by his merciful guidance may perform the ſame, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord,

in whoſe bleſſed name and words I continue to pray, ſaying,

Our Father, &c.

A Prayer after Confirmation, which may be ſaid while others are confirming, and may be added to the Evening Prayer of the Party confirmed.

BLeſſed and praiſed be thy holy name, O Lord, for thoſe freſh ſupplies of grace which thou haſt been pleaſed to communicate to me.

Bleſſed be thy name for thoſe comfortable aſſurances thou haſt given me of thy favour and goodneſs towards me. Bleſſed be thy name for that privilege thou haſt now beſtowed upon me of approaching thy holy table, and of ſtrengthening and refreſhing my ſoul by partaking there of the body and blood of Chriſt.

Encreaſe in me, O Lord, more and more the gifts of thy holy Spirit, that I may be wiſe for eternity, and make it the chief buſineſs of my life to pleaſe thee in all my actions; that I may love and fear thee above all things; that I may be juſt and righteous in all my dealings, and ready to communicate to the neceſſities of others; that I may keep a conſtant watch over myſelf, ſo as not to exceed the bounds of temperance and ſobriety.

Grant, O Lord, that my corrupt nature may be daily renewed and purified by thy holy Spirit, that no danger or perſecution may affright me from my duty; that no pleaſure may make me careleſs and negligent in the performance of it; and

and that under afflictions, moſt grievous to fleſh and blood, I may be entirely reſigned, and ſubmit to thy holy will and pleaſure. Let thy holy Spirit, O Lord, ſo guide and govern me through the whole courſe of my ſhort life in this world, that I may not fail to obtain eternal life in the world to come, through Jeſus Chriſt, our Lord. *Amen.*

Instructions for Self-Examination.

After you have performed your ordinary Devotion for the Day, you may uſe this Prayer before Examination.

O Thou great ſearcher of hearts, who ſeeſt and knoweſt all my ſins; help me ſo to ſearch every ſecret of my heart, that I may leave no ſin, if poſſible unrepented of. Give me grace ſo impartially to judge and condemn myſelf, ſo humbly to repent and beg pardon, that I may not be condemned, when I ſhall appear at thy tribunal, in the great and terrible day of the Lord Jeſus.

But alas! after the moſt ſtrict examination, who can number his iniquities? Who can tell how oft he offended? Cleanſe me therefore, O Lord, I beſeech thee, not only from my preſumptions and known ſins, but from all ſecret and unknown tranſgreſſions, for his ſake, who died for ſinners, Jeſus Chriſt our Lord. *Amen.*

MOTIVES *to* EXAMINATION.

HAving devoutly prayed for God's aſſiſtance, doubt not but he will vouchſafe it to you. And the better to diſpoſe your heart to the duty of ſelf-examination.

Conſider ſeriouſly with yourſelf: that it is appointed for all men once to die; and after death to be called to judgment. That God hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteouſneſs by Jeſus Chriſt; at whoſe coming all men ſhall riſe again with their bodies, and ſhall give an account of their own works: and they that have done good, ſhall go into life everlaſting; and they that have done evil, into everlaſting fire: for the books ſhall be opened, and the dead ſhall be judged out of the things written in theſe books according to their works. And then conſider how much, how nearly it concerns you to judge yourſelf before that time, that you be not judged, that is, condemned of the Lord.

Since then you muſt give an account of yourſelf, of all your thoughts, words, and actions; and be acquitted or condemned at the laſt day, according as they have been conformable to the law of God, or not; with what ſeriouſneſs, with what ſincerity, and religious awe, ought you to ſet about this great work? So that by comparing your life with the law of God, you may perceive wherein you have done amiſs, and heartily repent of your ſins; and by the grace of God, reſolve to lead a new life; in all things conforming yourſelf to his holy will and pleaſure, and then you ſhall not be condemned of the Lord.

Again, conſider with yourſelf, that now is the time of ſalvation, that by the uſe of theſe means of grace you may get an opportunity of reconciling yourſelf to your offended God; of doing the work you are ſet to do; and of making yourſelf capable of ſalvation; which you know not how ſoon may be taken from you.

And

And that this conſideration may have the better effect upon you; imagine yourſelf a while in the other world, among ſeparate and departed ſpirits, whoſe ſeaſon and opportunity of action is over; upon whom the ſun of grace, as well as natural life, is gone down, and that night come, in which no man can work: in ſhort, who are either happy or miſerable for ever.

Conſider with yourſelf ſeriouſly the condition of theſe ſpirits, what thoughts and ſentiments they have of things; what they think of a ſinful, and what ſenſe they have of a holy and religious life; what inward rejoicings and raptures thoſe have, who were ſo wiſe and happy, as to apply themſelves to virtue and piety; and how they now juſtify and approve their conduct, bleſſing and admiring the grace and goodneſs of God. And what anguiſh, rage, ſelf-condemnation and regret, thoſe return upon themſelves, who lived in ſin and wickedneſs! How do they unwiſh all their paſt thoughts and actions, their deſigns and undertakings, their buſineſſes and employments, their pleaſures and their friendſhips, their vain converſations, and their merry meetings, their jeſts on religion, and upon good men; yea, and their very beings too; I ſay, how do they unwiſh all theſe things! How paſſionately do they wiſh again for thoſe opportunities which they once had, but can never again recover; and which you now have, but are too apt to miſpend and trifle away: not conſidering this life is the only opportunity for tranſacting the great affair of eternity; and that though it is now in your power to be happy, yet it will not be always ſo; for your day will end, and your night will come. And therefore it highly concerns you, to employ the preſent time well, and to work whilſt it is called day, before the night cometh, when no man can work. Conſider ſeriouſly of theſe things, and, by the grace of God, they will work upon your heart, and make it more humble, more conſiderate, more diſpoſed for repentance and devotion, and more ſuſceptible of divine impreſſions.

2. After

2. After you have ſo long conſidered of theſe things, as to be affected with them, ſet yourſelf in the preſence of almighty God, who knoweth all things, and carefully examine into the ſtate and condition of your ſoul. For which purpoſe, you may uſe the heads of examination that follow, or ſuch other as you find better ſuited to your condition: and where you find you have offended God, you ought ſorrowfully to confeſs and bewail your having ſo done, and reſolve by his grace to amend for the future.

For you are to conſider, examination is in order to attain a true and diſtinct knowledge of yourſelf, and the actions of your paſt life; and eſpecially to bring your ſins to remembrance, with all their aggravating circumſtances: ſo that conſidering the folly of them, and the evil conſequences thereof, you may be brought to a hatred and abhorrence of them; to a hearty ſorrow for them, and thorough purpoſe of forſaking them. Examination is alſo in order to recollect what temptations have uſually prevailed on you, and to conſider before-hand, whatever the ſame, or ſome other, are, or may be moſt liable to prevail, ſo that you may arm yourſelf againſt them by holy reſolutions, and watchfulneſs, and circumſpection: and alſo to try the temper and diſpoſition of your mind and heart, whether you are ſo reſigned, contented, and humble, and have ſuch love and charity, and ſuch other holy diſpoſitions as the goſpel requires; that if you have not, you may endeavour, by the aſſiſtance of God's grace, to attain them: and alſo may take up ſuch holy reſolutions, that every thought (ſo far as human infirmity will admit) may be brought into ſubjection to the will of God. And when you have in ſome meaſure attained to newneſs of life, you muſt endeavour to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

Self-examination is therefore in order to bring you to a true and ſincere repentance; by which is not meant a ſorrow for ſin only, but alſo an entire change of mind, and an effectual reformation of life; ſo as hereafter

hereafter to deny all ungodlineſs and worldly luſts, and to live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly in this preſent evil world; not allowing yourſelf in the continuance of any known ſin; but ſincerely practiſing whatſoever you ſhall underſtand to be your duty; and to bring forth fruits meet for repentance, by ceaſing to do evil, and learning to do good: that is, in ſhort, to live a holy life, which conſiſts in a conſtant and perſevering obedience to all the commands of God, in a goſpel-ſenſe; (allowing for human weakneſſes and imperfections) which ſeem to be the proper notions the holy ſcriptures give of repentance, and upon which only there is any promiſe of ſalvation.

When therefore you have carefully examined yourſelf; and (as it may be proper) have ſet down in writing what ſins you find you have committed, and what duties you have neglected; conſider them in all their aggravating circumſtances; whether they have been done againſt the motions of God's holy ſpirit, and perhaps ſome of them frequently, and againſt your reſolutions to the contrary. But there may be yet greater aggravations of ſin; namely, when the ſinner has committed it ſo often, and lived in it ſo long, that it is become habitual or cuſtomary to him; and inſtead of being aſhamed and confounded for it, makes a mock at it; and not only takes pleaſure and delight, but boaſts and glories therein. The neceſſity of conſidering the ſeveral aggravations of our ſins, appears from hence, becauſe the circumſtances we were in, when we committed ſuch or ſuch a ſin, may not a little enhance and increaſe our guilt; and a ſin attended with many aggravating circumſtances in the commiſſion thereof, requires a proportionable degree of ſorrow and humiliation, in order to our forſaking it, and obtaining pardon for it. This being done, endeavour to poſſeſs your mind, with a true ſenſe of the great evil of ſin; how contrary it is to God's holineſs, to his will, to his commands, his goodneſs, his juſtice, and eſpecially to the great myſtery of godlineſs; how contrary

trary alſo it is to man, to his reaſon and conſcience, to his inward peace and ſatisfaction, and to his intereſt temporal and ſpiritual, preſent and future; that this is the only evil, which was thought worthy of the ſon of God to deliver us from, who died to redeem us from the bondage of ſin and ſatan.

In the height of all that love, which the compaſſionate ſaviour of the world had for periſhing mankind, he did not think fit to reſcue them from pain, ſickneſs, poverty, diſgrace, or any of the common afflictions of human life; no, nor even from death itſelf. All theſe ſeemed to be below his notice; only ſin and damnation appeared to him to be evils ſo great, that he would not endure the thought of our being ſubject to them. For "God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotton ſon, to the end that all that believe in him," (that is, believe in him, in order to obey him) "ſhould not periſh but have everlaſting life:" "to obey" has been added, becauſe in this text, as in divers other, the word belief is taken for the whole of religion, obedience as well as faith.

Endeavour to keep a conſtant remembrance of theſe things in your mind; for they will be of great uſe to you, not only to lead you to a true repentance for what is paſt, but to prevent your falling into ſin for the future.

It will be impoſſible to give ſuch directions for the performance of this duty, as will be proper for all perſons; thoſe who have led wicked lives, and have for a long time put off repentance, have undoubtedly a great account to make up; and therefore muſt ſpend the more time and pains in reconciling themſelves, by conſidering their paſt lives, and forming good reſolutions. Thoſe that began this duty betimes, and who by the grace of God, have been kept in their youth from contracting vicious habits, or committing any great ſins, have leſs to do, when they ſet about this duty: nevertheleſs, ſelf-examination, being a duty ſo often, and ſo plainly taught by God in holy ſcripture, who beſt

beſt knew the neceſſity and advantage of it; no one that is a chriſtian, ought to neglect, or perform it ſlightly.

When you examine yourſelf, let it be chiefly about your wilful ſins, and ſins of commiſſion; and be not over ſcrupulous, either to accuſe yourſelf of ſin you never committed, or to reckon up all your infirmities; for that would render your examination endleſs and impracticable: and though there may be ſome ſins that you may doubt whether you have committed; others you may fear you have forgot; yet be not diſcouraged, for when you have acted honeſtly and ſincerely, reſt ſatisfied; it being all that religion requireth: but what ſins you cannot recollect and find out, ſo as particularly to confeſs and bewail, you ought to conclude under a general repentance for whatſoever you have done amiſs; and to pray that God would cleanſe you from your ſecret faults.

When you have once thoroughly examined your life, you muſt not think your work at an end; but muſt frequently exerciſe yourſelf therein; and the oftner you do ſo, the more eaſy and delightful you will find it. At ſuch times it may not be neceſſary that you ſhould examine your whole life with that ſtrictneſs you did at firſt; but chiefly examine yourſelf, how you have kept your good reſolutions, what progreſs you have made in a religious courſe of life, and what ſins of commiſſion or omiſſion you have been guilty of, ſince your laſt examination, and how you came to fall into them; what the temptations, what the circumſtances and occaſions; that you may arm yourſelf againſt them, and ſo avoid them for the time to come.

General Heads of Examination.

O My ſoul, enter into the conſideration of thine own ſtate, ſearch thine heart to the bottom; aſk thyſelf, what thou haſt done, how thou haſt carried thyſelf ſince the time thou waſt by baptiſm firſt admitted into covenant with God, or ſince thou didſt laſt renew

new that covenant with him? How haſt thou behaved thyſelf with reſpect to the duties thou oweſt to God, thy neighbour and thyſelf?

I. *Of our Duty towards God.*

HAVE I loved God, before and above all other things?

Have I received the ſcriptures, not as the word of men; but as they are in truth, the word of God?

Have the promiſes and threatnings therein prevailed with me, to govern myſelf according to the holy and admirable precepts therein delivered?

Have I not prophaned the holy and dreadful name of God, by perjury or unlawful oaths, or by cuſtomary ſwearing or curſing in common converſation?

Have I not irreverently mentioned the name of God in my common converſation?

Have I honoured him by a reverent uſage of whatſoever things or perſons belong to him, and are dedicated to his homage and ſervice?

Have I religiouſly obſerved the day ſet apart for his more immediate worſhip, in keeping it holy, to thoſe ends for which it was appointed, by attending the publick ſervice of the church; in reading and hearing his holy word; in prayer and meditation and good diſcourſe?

Have I ſo little regarded this holy day? as to ſpend it in travelling, and taking unneceſſary

journies thereupon, ſuch as I might as well have gone on any other day?

Have I ſpent and ſquandered it away in uſeleſs and unneceſſary viſits, in recreations, or in wicked and unprofitable converſations, or in following the works of my calling?

Have I truſted in God, and acknowledged my dependence upon him only?

Have I every day duly prayed to him, and praiſed him for his mercies?

And when I have done it at church, or at home in my family, or in ſecret by myſelf, hath it been only out of cuſtom; or with ſuch a ſenſe of God, and ſuch ſerioufneſs, fervency, and affection, as he requires?

Have I uſed ſuch conſiderations beforehand, as might enable me rightly to perform the ſame?

Have I laboured to form ſuch apprehenſions of God as are worthy of his adorable majeſty, and to furniſh my mind with uſeful and neceſſary knowledge?

Have I (notwithſtanding the means of grace, and the light of the goſpel) ſuffered myſelf to live in ignorance of him, and my duty?

Hath the conſideration of his infinite power made me fearful to offend him?

Have I feared man more than God, by committing ſin, to avoid diſgrace or any temporal evil?

Have I preſumptuouſly hoped for ſalvation, whilſt I continued to live in the wilful commiſſion of one or more ſins?

Have

Have I not been ſo fooliſh as to put off my repentance, thereby rendering myſelf leſs able to ſet about it?

Have I reſigned myſelf, and all my concerns, to the all-wiſe and good providence of God?

Have I endeavoured to bear his afflicting hand with patience and humility; conſidering that the greateſt ſufferings I can undergo in this world, are much leſs than the deſert of my ſins? Or have I not murmured, or been impatient under any trouble that has befallen me?

Have I grown better by my afflictions?

Have I frequented the holy ſacrament? Or have I not ſtayed away through cauſeleſs prejudice, or feigned excuſes, being unwilling to part with my ſins?

If I have come to the bleſſed ſacrament, have I not received it without repentance, and a ſtedfaſt purpoſe to lead a new life; without a firm and lively faith, a hearty and thankful remembrance of the love of Chriſt, in giving himſelf to be a ſacrifice for my ſins; and without a ſincere and univerſal love and good-will to all mankind?

Have I made it my care to live ſuitably to my ſacramental profeſſion, and ſolemn engagements?

Have I endeavoured to affect my heart with a lively ſenſe of the multiplied mercies of God to me, both temporal and ſpiritual?

Have I ſeriouſly conſidered that amazing inſtance of the love of Chriſt in redeeming me

from the bondage and dominion of ſin, and the tyranny of the Devil?

Do I depend upon the merits and ſatisfaction of Chriſt, and hope for acceptance with God, only through him, and not for any merit of my own?

Have I, as a weak creature, depended upon the light, grace, and aſſiſtance of the holy ſpirit, to further my endeavours, to guide and ſtrengthen me in all my performances, and to direct and comfort me in all my temptations, difficulties, and troubles.

II. *Of our Duty towards our Neighbour.*

O My ſoul, ſeriouſly conſider thy paſt actions, how haſt thou diſcharged thy duty to thy neighbour? Haſt thou conſidered that in the ſenſe of the goſpel, not only the perſon who dwells near thee, but every man is thy neighbour?

Have I, according to the ability and opportunities which God hath given me, done good to all that ſtand in need of my help?

Have I carried it to my neighbour, as one that loves him ſincerely and heartily?

Have I done unto others as I would they ſhould do unto me; that is, have I done to others what I could reaſonably expect or deſire they ſhould do to me, if in the like circumſtances? And on the other hand, have I been careful not to do any thing to others that I could reaſonably deſire they ſhould do unto me?

Have

Have I, in conformity to this rule, endeavoured in my place and ſtation to prevent evil and damage to the ſouls, and bodies, and eſtates of others?

Have I wronged no Man in his ſoul, by leading him into ſuch errors as are deſtructive of true religion; by enticing and teaching him to ſin againſt God, and to wound his conſcience; by ſetting him an ill example; by counſelling or commanding him to do that which was diſpleaſing to God, or by conſenting to his ſins?

Have I diſcouraged or deterred any one from the ſerious practice of religion and piety?

Have I ſought and endeavoured to bring thoſe to repentance, whom I have any ways led to ſin?

Have I delighted cauſeleſsly to grieve any one?

Have I hurt any perſon in his body, by offering any force or violence to him; by drawing him into intemperance, or any vices; or by exciting jealouſies, quarrels, or fightings among men?

Have I injured my neighbour in his goods or eſtate; by damaging him; by defrauding or over-reaching him in bargains, or contracts; or in his good name, by ſlandering, backbiting or inſult?

Have I, in the management of my eſtate or calling, run into debts without hopes or deſign of payment?

Have I not publiſhed my neighbours faults, when neither the glory of God, nor the good of others, made ſuch publication neceſſary?

Have I raſhly or wrongfully cenſured or judged any perſon?

Have I flattered any into evil, ſoothing them up in it, or commending them for it, or for that good I knew they had not?

If I have by any means, or upon any account whatſoever, done any wrong to any perſon; have I endeavoured to the extent of my power to make what reparation or ſatisfaction I can, thereby teſtifying my ſincere repentance for what I have done amiſs?

When others have offended or injured me, have I been eaſy to be reconciled; and ready to forgive and to do good offices even to my enemies; conſidering my own many and great offences both againſt God and againſt man, of which I hope and need forgiveneſs?

Have I reſted only in not doing wrong, in not injuring my neighbour, either in ſoul, body, or eſtate?

Have I had that univerſal love and charity to all men, as to deſire all good to them, and not ſo much as to wiſh evil or harm to any one?

Have I not envied the good or proſperity of my neighbour?

Have I endeavoured to aſſiſt my neighbour in any good, to comfort him in his troubles; and when aſperſed wrongfully, to vindicate his reputation?

Have I relieved the wants and neceſſities of my neighbour according to my power, as one that is affected with them, and as being myſelf alſo liable to the ſame wants, diſtreſſes, and troubles with others?

Have

Have I had a more ſpecial love to all true and ſincere chriſtians, borne with their infirmities, and heartily deſired and ſought their welfare?

Have I obſerved truth in my words, dealings, and contracts with all men?

Have I not offended by lying, falſhood, or miſrepreſentation?

Have I performed my words and contracts without ſhuffling, treachery and deceit?

Have I carried it with an humble, quiet, and peaceable ſpirit to all men, avoiding (as much as in me lay) all occaſions of offence, quarrels or differences?

On the contrary, have I not widened and enlarged them?

Have I been careful of thoſe of my family, my friends, and relations, or any others that are committed to my care, to counſel, to comfort, to reprove, as occaſion was given, and need required?

Relative Duties.

HOW have I performed the duties incumbent upon me towards my ſeveral relations?

As a Huſband.

HAVE I been faithful to the ſolemn contract and engagement I then made in the preſence of God?

Have I, in all lawful and reaſonable inſtances, condeſcended and complied with my Wife?

Have I loved, cheriſhed, comforted, and honoured her?

Have I borne with her weakneſſes and infirmities?

Has my behaviour to her been prudent, flexible, and obliging?

Have I not been peremptory, rigorous, and magiſterial in my commands?

Have I neglected to defend and protect her, to maintain and provide for her?

Have I not omitted to pray for her, and to ſhare with her in all her reaſonable joys and ſorrows?

As a Wife.

HAVE I refuſed to comply with thoſe commands, in which God requires me to obey and ſerve, to love and honour my huſband?

Have I not provoked him, or publiſhed his faults?

Have I borne with his infirmities?

Have I given him cauſe of jealouſy or been unfaithful to his bed?

Have I been frugal in the management of my expences, with reſpect to the circumſtances and condition of my huſband?

Have I not been expenſive and prodigal in my way of living?

Have I not ſquandered away my huſband's ſubſtance?

Have I reſtrained myſelf within thoſe bounds, that both reaſon, religion, and the condition of my huſband require?

Have

Have I been indifferent and careleſs in my carriage towards him, not forecaſting to do what I thought would oblige and pleaſe him?

Have I been diſobedient to his juſt commands, and ſo caſt off his yoke from me?

Have I been unconcerned in his joys and ſorrows?

Have I neglected to recommend him to the grace and protection of God in my prayers?

As a Parent.

HAVE I preferred the eternal intereſt of my children before their temporal?

Have I not been more careful and ſolicitous to provide for their bodies than their ſouls?

Have I taught them, as they were capable of learning, to know, fear, love, and worſhip God, with a perfect heart, and a willing mind?

Have I early inſtructed them in the ways that lead to life everlaſting, and endeavoured to form in their minds the principles of virtue and religion?

Have I earneſtly and frequently prayed to God for the gifts and graces of his holy Spirit, to renew, and change, and purify their corrupt nature, and for his bleſſing and favour upon them?

Have I been no ways acceſſary to the ſins of my children, by an ill example I have ſet them?

Have I not given them ſuch an education, as would naturally lead them into pride and vanity?

Have I endeavoured to make them of a meek and humble diſpoſition?

Have I taught them how to govern their paſſions, and to moderate their affections to world[ly] things;

things; and encourage them, by my own example, to follow that which is good?

Have I done my part to provide what was neceſſary and convenient for their living, and comfortable ſubſiſtence and being in the world?

Have I not been too fond and indulgent to them; ſuffering them to go on in their follies and ſins, without ſuch correction and reproof, as in duty I was bound to give them?

As a Child.

HAVE I reverenced and honoured my parents, obeyed their lawful commands, and attended to their wiſe counſels and inſtructions?

Have I adviſed with them in affairs of conſequence and concern to me?

Have I not been diſobedient to them? Diſhonoured them in my mind, or carried myſelf rudely and irreverently in my behaviour towards them?

Have I not been aſhamed of them?

Have I not mocked, or ſpoken evil of them? If reduced to want and poverty, have I made a comfortable and honourable proviſion for them, according to my ability?

Have I not been ſtubborn and obſtinate towards them, and endeavoured to caſt off my ſubjection to them?

Have I not diſpoſed of myſelf in marriage, without their advice or conſent?

A Brother or Siſter.

HAVE I had a tender affection, and a compaſſionate concern for my brethren and ſiſters,

ſiſters, endeavouring to promote their good, both ſpiritual and temporal?

Have I commended them to God in my Prayers?

Have I not been unconcerned for their welfare, and deſtitute of a natural affection towards them?

A Maſter.

HAVE I treated my ſervants as a chriſtian, and like one who believes he has a maſter in heaven, to whom he muſt render an account?

Have I performed the conditions I obliged myſelf to, when I took them into my ſervice?

Have I uſed them with mildneſs and gentleneſs?

Have I been cruel and ſevere towards them, laying a greater burthen upon them than they were able to bear?

Have I had a tender care and concern for their ſouls, endeavouring to inſtruct them in the duties and principles of the chriſtian religion?

Have I afforded them time and opportunities for the ſervice of God in publick and private?

Have I taken care of their bodies, by providing what was fitting for them?

Have I not put them upon cheating and lying, and ſo been a partaker with them in their ſin?

Have I been remiſs in ſuffering them to neglect their duty to God?

Have I been conſtant in my daily devotions with my family?

Have I not omitted this neceſſary duty upon ſuch ſlight and trivial pretences and excuſes, as would

would have had no weight with me in matters that relate to this temporal life?

A Servant.

HAVE I been faithful and induſtrious in ſerving my maſter and miſtreſs?

Have I been honeſt and juſt to them?

Have I purloined, or ſtole, or any way defrauded them of their goods, or been careleſs and waſteful of them?

Have I diſobeyed their lawful commands.

Have I any ways injured them in their reputation?

Have I ſerved them with ſingleneſs of heart, as to the Lord, and not to men?

Have I been diligent in my duty, only when I was obſerved and taken notice of?

Have I, as much as in me lay, lived quietly and peaceably with my fellow-ſervants?

Have I not been ſpiteful and malicious againſt them?

Have I accuſed them wrongfully?

Have I ſet them a good example?

Have I exerciſed that tenderneſs to the children in my family, that was juſtly and reaſonably expected from me?

Have I prayed for my maſter and miſtreſs, and the reſt of the family, in my private prayers?

As a Magiſtrate, &c.

HAVE I made it my endeavour to be a terror to evil doers and a praiſe to them that do well?

Have I expreſſed a zeal for the honour of God, by bringing publick offenders to juſtice; by putting the laws in execution againſt all vice,

vice, profaneneſs, and debauchery; and by giving a good example myſelf?

Have I not diſcouraged thoſe, who, from a concern for the intereſts of religion, and a love to the ſouls of men, have been zealous and active in this good work?

Have I not been more intent upon my own private intereſt, than in advancing the common good?

Have I been faithful and diligent in the diſcharge of thoſe duties that are incumbent upon me, as living in the town, place, or pariſh, whereto I belong?

Have I endeavoured to inform myſelf of my duty, in order to the doing of it, when I have been called to the office of conſtable, churchwarden, or any other pariſh-office?

Have I conſidered how to avoid and ſhun whatever might occaſion ſtrife, diſſenſion, and endeavoured, as far as in me lay, to become uſeful and ſerviceable in my place and ſtation?

III. *Of our Duties towards ourſelves.*

HAVE I wiſely conſidered the end for which I was created by God, that I might be the better able to direct my thoughts, words, and actions to that end.

Do I make it the great concern and buſineſs of my life, to ſerve and glorify God, that I may thereby be prepared, and meet for happineſs in his preſence and kingdom for ever?

Have I frequently and ſeriouſly conſidered, that I am here as in a ſtate of trial and probation, not of happineſs and enjoyment?

Have I not lived without thought and conſideration, though intereſt and duty, and the expreſs command of God, call and oblige me to be much and frequent in the exerciſe thereof?

How have I ſpent my precious time?

Have I not waſted it in idleneſs, or in any unprofitable vanity?

Have I laid to heart the ſhortneſs and uncertainty of this preſent life, and daily improved it to the beſt advantages?

Have I exerciſed a daily care and watchfulneſs over my deceitful heart, reſiſting its importunities and luſts?

Have I ſeriouſly conſiered the great damage and miſchief that ſin has done to human nature?

Have I applied myſelf with my whole ſtrength and might, to recover that reſemblance, which man, when he firſt came out of his maker's hands, bore to him?

Have I contented myſelf with the form and outſide of religion and godlineſs, neglecting the life and power thereof?

Have I laboured after the true mortification of the ſpirit, after that real and inward purity of ſoul, which Chriſt requires in all his diſciples and followers?

Have I diligently and earneſtly implored the aids and aſſiſtances of the holy Spirit of God, to renew and ſanctify me?

Have I laboured to improve my ſoul in knowledge and wiſdom, in grace and holineſs, taking heed to ſecure my ſalvation more than any temporal intereſt?

Have

Have I been contented with my preſent portion of good here, according to the will of God?

Have I not ſuffered myſelf to be immoderately diſcompoſed at events, which are not in my power; and been diſſatisfied and uneaſy at ſuch circumſtances, as the good providence of God has thought fit to place me in?

Have I not been too covetous of the world; its riches, honours, and pleaſures?

Have I not ſought to gain or keep them by ſinful means?

Have I not been immoderately concerned, and anxious about preſent things?

Have I not grieved overmuch for worldly croſſes, loſſes, and diſappointments? And on the other ſide, have I not placed my happineſs in its good things, and rejoiced in them overmuch?

Have I laboured to diſentangle my affections from this world, and to raiſe up my mind to the things which are above; the enjoyments of that ſuperior world, for which I was principally deſigned?

Have I been diligent and faithful in that place and ſtate of life, unto which it hath pleaſed God to call me?

Have I been diligent in doing my own buſineſs, and to provide thoſe things that are needful and expedient for myſelf and family, and ſuch as depend upon me?

Have I endeavoured to make myſelf uſeful in the world, and charitable to my fellow-creatures?

Have I been temperate and chaſte, as one that is ſenſible, that the perfection and happi-

neſs

neſs of a reaſonable creature does not conſiſt in ſenſual enjoyments, but in thoſe that are ſpiritual?

Have I therefore watched againſt the luſts of the fleſh?

Have I not had an impure heart, or unclean affections, or offended by any unchaſte behaviour, words or actions?

Have I abſtained from all unnatural and unlawful pleaſures of ſenſe: and been moderate in the uſe of ſuch as are lawful and allowable by the chriſtian religion?

Have I reſtrained my appetite? Have I not committed exceſs in eating and drinking, in ſleep, or recreations?

Have I frequently exerciſed myſelf in ſelf-denial and mortification, that my fleſh might be ſubdued, and my ſpirit refined, and ſo prepared and qualified for the company, the employment, and the pleaſure of heaven?

Have I been humble and little in my own eyes, as a depending creature, and poor ſinner ſhould be?

Have I not betrayed pride and haughtineſs in word or carriage?

Have I not, from an over-valuation of myſelf, being ambitious of, or too much affected with the applauſes of men above my deſert; or made it too much my end in any of my actions?

Have I not to that end unduly ſet out myſelf to procure my own praiſe?

Have I not been too nice and tender of my own reputation, to the neglect of my duty?

Have

Have I not feared too much the cenſures, reviling, and reproaches of men, in the diſcharge thereof?

Have I been contented to be vile for God's ſake?

Have I been meek and gentle in my ſpirit, words, and behaviour? Have I borne with the weakneſſes, indiſcretions, and infirmities of others, as becometh one who is ſubject to infirmities?

Have I not been angry without cauſe, or above juſt cauſe?

Have I not been pettiſh and froward in little things, and upon meer miſtakes, and involuntary errors of others, for want of reviewing things in their juſt nature, weight, and meaſure?

Have I not ſuffered the ſun to go down upon my wrath? Have I not continued in it to the vexation of my own ſpirit, and thereby rendered myſelf unfit for the diſcharge of my duty both to God and man?

It is not eaſy to enumerate all the inſtances of duty reducible to theſe three heads; nor to ſet down the ſeveral breaches and violations of them: but the careful reading of the holy ſcriptures, more eſpecially the New-teſtament, together with a ſerious examination of our lives and converſations by thoſe uſeful and neceſſary heads of ſelf-examination lately ſet forth in the twelfth edition of the New Whole Duty of Man, (publiſhed by the king's authority,) which being the very method recommended by St. Paul himſelf, * in his diviſion of our duty as it reſpects God, our neighbour

* Tit. xi. 12.

and

and ourſelves, if carefully attended to, will aſſiſt any one in getting a competent knowledge of his own ſtate and condition.

However, we ſhall juſt mention ſome of the methods ſet down by ſome others who have treated on this ſubject.

Some have collected a ſhort ſummary of the ſins forbidden, and duties commanded in the holy ſcriptures, and examined themſelves thereby: as, Dr. Horneck "in his crucified Jeſus," and, Mr. Kettleweil "in his meaſures of chriſtian obedience."

Others have reduced the ſum and ſubſtance of our duty to the ten commandments; and by the help thereof have advantageouſly performed this neceſſary work, as is ſet down in the art of catechizing, and by Dr. Comber on the common-prayer, and his diſcourſe on the communion-office. Some have examined themſelves by our Lord's ſermon on the mount, contained in in the fifth, ſixth, and ſeventh chapter of St. Matthew, as ſet down by Dr. Hammond, in his practical cathechiſm.

We will mention but one method more, which is, by recollecting the ſeveral parts and branches of the baptiſmal vow, making a pauſe at each particular; and inquiring how we have kept it; and in what inſtances we have broken the ſolemn engagements we then entered into. The peruſal of Dr. Bray's diſcourſe upon the baptiſmal covenant, or any other judicious expoſition on the church-catechiſm, may be of uſe to us, when we examine ourſelves in this method.

Thoſe

Thoſe that have made ſome progreſs in chriſtianity, and are in good earneſt, ſtriving to enter in at the ſtrait gate, and walk in the narrow way that leadeth to life, find the examination of themſelves much more eaſy than thoſe who indulge themſelves in ſin, and live careleſs and negligent lives; for the former are ſtill labouring after a nearer conformity to the example of Chriſt Jeſus, and keep a watch and guard over themſelves. Every portion of ſcripture they read and hear; every grace and virtue that is recommended in publick; every ſin, againſt which the judgments of God are denounced, ſuggeſts matter to them to examine themſelves by; and they can preſently without any reluctance, put the queſtion to themſelves, do I practiſe this or that virtue? am I guilty of this or that ſin?

It is not material which of theſe methods we follow, provided the thing be carefully done; every one is at liberty to chooſe which he thinks will beſt let him into the knowledge of himſelf; though we cannot forbear again recommending the method preſcribed in the New Whole Duty of Man, as the moſt effectual to enable one to judge, whether, according to the terms of the covenant made with man in Chriſt Jeſus, a happy or miſerable eternity is likely to be his portion. If any one wants more particular directions, he may have recourſe to ſome ſpiritual guide.

Though ſelf-examination be a duty, which ought no day to be wholly omitted; yet there are ſome ſeaſons wherein we ought to take a more

more exact ſurvey of our own ſtate: ſuch are times of trouble and affliction; days of faſting and humiliation; and when (by the aſſiſtance of the divine grace) we have a lively ſenſe of the great evil and damning nature of ſin; and more eſpecially before we renew our covenant with God in the holy ſacrament.

A Prayer, conſiſting of Confeſſion of Sin, and imploring Pardon and Grace, which may be uſed in our Preparation to the Sacrament, or at any other Time of extraordinary Devotion.

I.

ALmighty Lord God, juſt and holy, I deſire to humble myſelf before thee in a deep ſenſe of my own vileneſs and unworthineſs, by reaſon of the many and great ſins I have at any time committed againſt thee, my ſovereign lord and judge.

I have offended thee by my evil thoughts of many kinds; by vain, raſh, falſe or wicked words; and by many and unjuſt and ungodly deeds, which I have committed againſt the dictates of reaſon, the checks of my own conſcience, and the known precepts of my duty.

II.

I have too often neglected the duties of religion, which are the great and important concern of my life. And when I have performed them, it hath been often careleſly and out of cuſtom, or without due affection and attention of mind.

I have

I have not served thee with that purity of intention, with that sincerity of heart, with that fervency of spirit, with that zeal for thy glory, with that watchfulness, care, diligence, and constancy, that I ought.

III.

The pleasures and business of this life, or the desires of growing rich, or being great, have caused me too often to forget that I am but a stranger upon earth, and that my days are as a shadow, that will soon pass away.

Nor have I so far disengaged my heart, as by grace I might, from all things here below, as to have my hopes and affections principally set on things above and on that happiness which will last for evermore.

But I have been too anxious and solicitous for the things of this life, not considering thy gracious promise, that if I first seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness, all things necessary shall be added unto me.

Nor have I been so contented with my condition in this world, nor so resigned to thy providence, as I ought.

How little have I mortified my members which are upon the earth, ever prone to inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness! and yet I know, that if any one love the world, the love of the father is not in him; and that the poor in spirit are blessed.

IV.

IV.

I have not been ſufficiently thankful for the continued effects of thy bounty towards me. Neither have I received the afflicting diſpenſations of thy providence with ſuch patience and ſubmiſſion as are due to thy wiſdom, nor made ſuch improvements and advantages of them, as thy goodneſs did thereby intend me.

V.

I know that religion has nothing in it that is worthy of blame or reproach, but is of all things the moſt comely, and worthy of a man; and yet, out of a fooliſh regard to the opinions and cenſures of men, I have too often been aſhamed to practiſe divers important duties, and to diſcountenance the evil practices or vices of others, or to own the cauſe of virtue and piety; not conſidering that whoſoever is aſhamed of Chriſt and his words, in this adulterous and ſinful generation, of him ſhall the ſon of man be aſhamed, when he cometh in the glory of his father with the holy angels.

VI.

I believe that all ſcripture is given by inſpiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for inſtruction in righteouſneſs, that ſuch as deſire, and ſincerely endeavour to ſerve thee truly, may be perfect, and thoroughly furniſhed unto all good works. And yet, O God, how ſeldom, how little, have I read and pondered thy holy word! how much have

I omitted ſearching the ſcriptures! and how fooliſh have I been in reading other books more than them! Not conſidering they beſt ſet before us the way of life, and way of death, and teach us what we muſt do to be ſaved from the wrath to come, and to inherit eternal life.

And when I have read thy holy word, it hath not been with ſuch good diſpoſitions, with ſuch an attentive and teachable mind, with ſuch an humble heart, and ſincere intentions to do whatſoever I ſhould perceive to be thy will, as I ought.

VII.

I have not had that juſt, that low and mean opinion of myſelf, that I ought; but have been too much deſirous of the praiſes of men.

I have not been ſo meek and gentle, ſo patient and conſiderate under reproaches, or ill treatment, as I ought; but have been too often carried out into ſuch degrees of anger or reſentment, as have diſcompoſed myſelf, or injured my neighbour; nor have I been ſo ready to put the faireſt and moſt charitable conſtructions upon his words or actions, as I ought.

VIII.

In my tranſactions with men, I have not had that regard to ſuch ſincere and candid dealing, or equity, as I ought; but have been too deceitful in my words or actions; and often too ſevere and rigorous in demanding my dues, or too backward in paying others, when, or in ſuch reaſonable meaſure, as I could and ought.

I have

I have been too inſenſible of the wants and miſeries of my neighbour; nor have I had that tenderneſs and compaſſion towards him, as to embrace all ſuch opportunities of relieving him, as I had opportunity and ability to do.

On all accounts I have too little conſidered the bleſſing thou haſt promiſed to the merciful, and the many and great mercies I daily receive of thee, and that I ſhall ſtand in need of much more and greater mercy from thee at the great day of our Lord.

I know the pure in heart are bleſſed, for thou haſt promiſed they ſhall ſee thee, O God. And yet ſo inſenſible, and unmoved have I been, that I have taken little care to cleanſe myſelf from all filthineſs of fleſh and ſpirit, ſo as to ſanctify thee, my Lord God, in my heart, whereby I might have a good hope of ſeeing thee, O God, in whoſe preſence is fulneſs of joy for evermore.

I know, to this bliſs, holineſs is the way: and yet how feeble and inconſtant have my endeavours been after it!

IX.

I have not been ſo careful in employing my time, as I ought; but have ſpent of it in eating, and drinking, and ſleeping, beyond what the ſupport and refreſhment of nature required, and too much in what I have called recreation and diverſion. I have ſpent too much time in dreſſing and adorning my body; and in paying or receiving formal or impertinent viſits; and have ſeveral other ways ſpent much of my precious time idly or unprofitably to myſelf or others.

How

How little time have I ſpent in reading, meditation, and ſelf-examination!

How little in mortification, abſtinence, faſting and retirement! And yet the day of my life is far ſpent, and the night of death is at hand when no man can work.

X.

How backward have I been to examine the ſtate of my ſoul, and to call my ſins to remembrance, ſo as to mourn and be affected with a godly ſorrow for them!

XI.

O! how ſtrong a propenſion have I to do evil! and how ſtrange an unwillingneſs to do good!

I confeſs, and lament, and bewail my wretched ſtate, I am corrupt, I have ſtrayed out of the way of life and happineſs; my conſcience accuſeth me. Yet, lo, thou, O God, art greater than my heart, can conceive, and knoweſt all things---[Here more particulars may be mentioned]----and, eſpecially, I lament and bewail before thee, from whom nothing is hid, that I have grievouſly offended thee by----[Here name the particular ſins.]

XII.

Theſe my ſins, with many more that I cannot remember, are all in thy ſight, and have left their wretched and miſerable effects upon my mind and heart; whereby thy image, in which I was created, is become defaced; and I am

eſtranged from thee, my God, my true, and only good and happineſs. So that when I look back upon the errors and miſcarriages of my life, and reflect how little I poſſeſs of the ſpirit and temper of the goſpel, my heart trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgments. Oh! how ſhall I appear before the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt, when he ſhall come in his power with the holy angels, to judge every man according to his works, and take vengeance on them that obey not the goſpel, ſince my life has been ſo unconformable thereto!

But I repent, O my God, I repent; I accuſe and condemn myſelf, I am grieved, I am troubled, and am heartily ſorry for theſe my miſdoings, and I turn unto thee with full purpoſe and reſolution of ſincere obedience for the time to come.

And I beſeech thee, O Lord, who art gracious and merciful, long-ſuffering, and of great goodneſs, and the father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who died for the ungodly, for his ſake, and for thy goodneſs ſake, pardon and forgive all my ſins; my ſins of ignorance, and thoſe I have committed thro' want of care and circumſpection, but eſpecially all my wilful ſins, and thoſe tranſgreſſions whereby I have any ways ſcandalized the chriſtian profeſſion, or occaſioned others to fall, and which I lament before thee.

O Lord, holy father, who alone canſt order the wills and affections of ſinful men, who gaveſt thy ſon to die, that he might redeem us from all iniquity; pardon and rectify the impurity of my heart and life, all irregular appetites and paſſions, and every wicked practice, of what nature

nature or kind ſoever; that all my members being mortified from all worldly and carnal luſts, I may no longer live in the fleſh to the luſts of men, but according to thy will, O God: and for ever hereafter live godly, righteouſly and ſoberly in this preſent evil world.

And ſeeing I am not able to do theſe things of myſelf, ſtrengthen me, I beſeech thee, O Lord, with the Holy Ghoſt, and daily increaſe in me thy manifold gifts of grace, the ſpirit of wiſdom and underſtanding, the ſpirit of counſel and ghoſtly ſtrength, the ſpirit of knowledge and true godlineſs; and fill me, O Lord, with the ſpirit of thy holy fear; that I may have victory, and triumph againſt the devil, the world and the fleſh, and at the laſt obtain the gift of eternal life, which thou haſt promiſed all thoſe that ſincerely love and obey thee, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord. *Amen. Our Father*, &c.

Another Form of Confeſſion, which may be uſed inſtead of the former.

O Moſt great and glorious Lord God, juſt and terrible in thy judgments to all obſtinate and rebellious ſinners, but of infinite mercy to ſuch as truly repent, and turn unto thee; look down, I beſeech thee, with the eyes of mercy upon me, who now preſent myſelf before thee, acknowledging that I am not worthy to lift up my eyes to the throne of thy glorious majeſty. O Lord, my ſins are ſo many and ſo great, that it is owing to thy infinite goodneſs and mercy, that I have now an opportunity of humbling myſelf before thee, and begg-

ing mercy for my ſoul, which I confeſs, has greatly ſinned againſt thee.

I acknowledge, O my God, that thou haſt, by innumerable inſtances, manifeſted thyſelf to be a moſt kind and indulgent father; but alas! I have abuſed thy goodneſs, and made very ungrateful returns for thy exceeding kindneſs and mercy. Inſtead of loving and delighting in thee, and paying thee a filial and chearful obedience, I find in myſelf many times a great proneneſs to offend thee, and a great backwardneſs and indiſpoſition to do thoſe things which thou requireſt of me.

O Lord! I lament and bewail the corruption of my nature, moſt ſorrowfully confeſſing before thee, that I have too great a deſire after the things of this world; too great a fondneſs for the profits and pleaſures of it: and though I am fully perſuaded, that it is my happineſs and privilege, as well as my duty, to love and ſerve thee, yet I am very apt to forget thee, and to grow careleſs and remiſs in that great and important work, which thou haſt given me to do.

O my God! I confeſs with ſorrow that this world hath taken ſuch hold of my affections, that I neither love thee, ſerve thee, nor obey thee as I ought to do; my devotion to thee is many times cold and languid; my prayers are full of wandrings, deadneſs and diſtractions, and the very beſt of my religious duties are accompanied with ſo many failings and imperfections, that I have great cauſe to humble myſelf before thee.

How

This is to be varied or omitted, as everyone thinks fit.

How greatly, O God, have I offended thee, by luſt and intemperance, by peeviſhneſs, paſſion, and anger, by covetouſneſs and ambition, by pride and envy, by prejudice and ill-will towards my neighbours, by murmuring and repining at the diſpenſations of thy providence, and by an unwillingneſs to reſign myſelf to thy diſpoſal in all things! How frequently have I violated my baptiſmal engagements, by preferring the vanities of this wicked world, before thy favour, and by ſuffering my heart, which has been dedicated to thy ſervice, to be brought under the bondage and dominion of ſin and folly!

And what ſhall I now ſay unto thee, O thou preſerver of men! O Lord, I have no hope but in thy mercy, and the infinite merits of my dear redeemer: and if thou rejecteſt me, I am loſt and undone for ever. But, O thou compaſſionate lover of ſouls! who knoweſt whereof we are made, and remembereſt that we are but duſt, turn not thy face from me, nor caſt thy ſervant away in diſpleaſure; let the interceſſions of thy beloved ſon prevail in my behalf, and for the ſake of his meritorious death and paſſion, for all that he has done, and all that he has ſuffered for me, have mercy upon me; pardon and forgive, I moſt earneſtly and unfeignedly beſeech thee, all the ſins and follies of my life paſt, which are more than I can number, and greater than I am able to bear; and more eſpecially, O my God, lay not to my charge [Here again may be named particulars.] O cleanſe

me from all my ſecret and unknown tranſgreſſions, and vouchſafe, O merciful father, to be reconciled unto me, who am ſorry for my ſins, and grieved that I have offended thee, my moſt gracious Lord and maſter, to whom I owe all the returns of love and duty, that can poſſibly be paid by a creature to his creator.

O Lord, reſerve not my ſins to be puniſhed in the day of thy fierce anger; (for who can dwell with everlaſting burnings! who is able to abide the fury of thy wrath!) but ſpare me, O moſt mighty God, and merciful ſaviour; and grant that I may never fall into thoſe evils which my ſins have juſtly deſerved. Thy property is always to have mercy; to thee only it appertaineth to forgive ſins; O turn away thy anger from me, who do meekly acknowledge my vileneſs, and truly repent me of my faults, and do now unfeignedly turn unto thee, with full purpoſe and reſolution of heart to ſerve thee faithfully, and to make it the great care and endeavour of my life to pleaſe and obey thee.

O Lord! there is nothing that I deſire ſo much, as to be of the number of thy faithful and obedient ſervants: thy favour is better than life itſelf; thy ſervice is the moſt perfect freedom. O enable me by the aſſiſtance of thy bleſſed ſpirit, to forſake all my ſins, and to reform whatever has been amiſs in the temper and diſpoſition of my mind, or in any of the actions of my life. Open thou mine eyes, that I may ſee the vileneſs and deformity, as well as danger of ſin; that I may fly from all appearance of evil, and with an unwearied diligence follow after

ter and purſue the things that make for my everlaſting peace. Grant, that for the time to come I may live only unto thee, in an aweful fear of thy great name, and a conſtant regard to thy bleſſed will, keeping always a conſcience void of offence, both towards thee and all men.

Give me grace to ſpend my time religiouſly, ſoberly, and uſefully, in the ſubduing of my paſſions, mortifying my corrupt inclinations, and in the practice of all thoſe duties thou requireſt of me; that when thou ſhalt think fit to take me out of this ſtate of trial and temptation here, I may be received into that bleſſed kingdom, where all tears ſhall be wiped from my eyes, and ſin and death ſhall be no more. Grant this, O merciful father, through the merits, and for the ſake of thy ſon and my only ſaviour Jeſus Chriſt. *Amen.*

A Prayer to be uſed at the ſame Time, or ſhortly after either of the foregoing Confeſſions.

O Moſt gracious and merciful Father, who, in pity and compaſſion to my ſoul, haſt given me this opportunity of humbling myſelf before thee, accept, I earneſtly intreat thee, of my unfeigned ſorrow for all my ſins which I have committed againſt thy divine majeſty; I confeſs it bears no proportion to the heinouſneſs of my offences; O do thou in much mercy look upon me, and let the infinite merits of my dear redeemer ſupply all my defects, and refuſe not, I beſeech thee, for his dear ſake, to be reconciled unto me, and to admit me into thy favour, with-

out which I am of all creatures the moſt miſerable.

O Lord, there is nothing that I deſire ſo much, as to be delivered from the power and dominion of my ſins, and to be at perfect peace with thee; for I have no reſt, ſo long as I think I am under thy diſpleaſure. I humbly therefore beg leave at this time to renew the vows and reſolutions I have often made, of loving and obeying thee; and for that end, I offer unto thy divine majeſty my ſoul and body, and all that is mine, humbly beſeeching thee to take them into thy cuſtody, that being in ſafety under thy protection, they may be for ever devoted to thee and thy ſervice.

It is not, O Lord, with any confidence in my own ſtrength, that I preſume to give up myſelf to thy obedience, (for alas! I am ſenſible that my heart is very falſe, and too eaſily drawn away by the deceitful tempter) but all my hope, and all my dependance is in thy almighty power and goodneſs; and to that I humbly fly for help againſt the cruel enemy of my ſoul, who is daily lying in wait to deſtroy me, and therefore in thee do I put my truſt. Thou art my hope and my confidence, my ſaviour and mighty deliverer; O never leave me then to myſelf, nor to the weakneſs of my own corrupt nature; but let thy holy Spirit be always preſent with me, to defend me in all my conflicts, to ſupport me under my many weakneſſes and infirmities, to inſtruct me in all difficult caſes, and, to carry me in ſafety through the trials and temptations of this dangerous and deceitful world; and grant, O merciful Father, that I may never grieve that bleſſed Spirit,

Spirit, nor fall into thoſe ſins and impurities, which will cauſe him to leave and forſake me, and to abandon me to my own fooliſh and preverſe will; but give me grace in all things to follow his guidance and direction, and to devote myſelf entirely to a life of virtue and religion; that denying all ungodlineſs, and worldly luſts, I may live righteouſly, ſoberly, and godly, in this preſent world; and after I have ſerved thee faithfully in this life, I may be received into thoſe bleſſed regions of everlaſting reſt and peace, which thou haſt reſerved for them that truely and ſincerely love and ſerve thee; through the merits of thy beloved ſon Jeſus Chriſt the righteous. *Amen.*

A Confeſſion of Sins, to be uſed by a grievous Sinner, who having led a very wicked Life, is now come to a Senſe of his Sins, and deſires to humble himſelf before God for the ſame.

O Moſt mighty God! thou art a conſuming fire to all rebellious and impenitent ſinners; a dreadful avenger of ſuch as are obſtinately wicked, but a moſt compaſſionate Father to all thoſe that truly repent, and turn unto thee; O how ſhall I dare to ſpeak unto thee, who am all over ſin and polution; a creature vile and loathſome in my own eyes by reaſon of my ſins, but much more ſo in thine, who art a God of infinite purity and holineſs, and hateſt iniquity with a perfect hatred! O Lord, when I look back upon my paſt life, I am aſtoniſhed at thy patience and long ſuffering towards me; and muſt acknowledge, that hadſt thou dealt with

me as I have deſerved, I had long before this been condemned to endleſs miſery and torments. For ever adored be that goodneſs of thine, which has dealt ſo graciouſly with me; for ever praiſed be that mercy, which has ſnatched me out of the jaws of the devouring lion, and ſaved me from the pit of deſtruction, which I was running headlong into; for ever magnified be that grace, which has at laſt touched my heart with a ſenſe of my ſins, and given me this opportunity of humbling myſelf before thee.

O Lord, I do now moſt ſorrowfully bewail and lament before thee, the ſins and iniquities of my paſt life, which are ſo exceeding many and great, that as I am confounded at the guilt of them, ſo I know not where to begin when I would confeſs them before thee. Even from my youth up have I been a rebellious and diſobedient ſinner, a contemner of thy laws, and one of thoſe wretched fools, that have made a mock at ſin, and would not hearken to wiſe counſel and reproof; I have grieved and deſpiſed my parents, derided my ſuperiors, and followed the dictates of my own fooliſh and perverſe will; my mind has been over-ſpread with blindneſs and ignorance, folly and falſe reaſonings, and almoſt every power and faculty of my ſoul is corrupted and defaced; that time, which ſhould have been employed to holy and excellent purpoſes, I have either conſumed upon my luſts, or trifled away in vain and unprofitable purſuits.

Wretched fool that I was! How have I preferred a life of folly and madneſs, of riot and extravagance, of noiſe and diſorder; a life

that

that has yielded no other fruits, but thoſe bitter ones of ſhame and remorſe, of ſorrow and affliction, before the peace, and pleaſure, and ſerenity of a virtuous, ſober, and religious converſation! How have I thought the ways of religion dull and unpleaſant; and nothing any further eligible, than as it conduced to the pleaſures and profits of this world!

O my God, I have ſinned againſt thee with a high hand, and have led a life directly oppoſite to thy bleſſed will; I have moſt grievouſly neglected the duties of religion both in publick and private, having ſpent little of my time in thy ſervice, and that little, (O Lord, thou knoweſt) in a profane or unworthy manner; while others have been offering up their prayers and praiſes to thy divine majeſty, or liſtening to thy holy word, my eyes have been frequently wandering after vanity, and my mind full of idle and impertinent, and many times (alas! with ſhame I confeſs it) of wanton and laſcivious thoughts.

O Lord! I dare not ſay, that I have ſpent any one day of my life to thy honour and glory; but how many days; nay years, have I ſpent in the ſervice of ſin; in luſt and intemperance; brutiſhneſs and ſenſuality; in profaning thy ſabbaths, abuſing thy ſacred name, ridiculing thy holy word, deſpiſing thy miniſters; and making a jeſt of all that is ſerious?

I have been proud and envious, luſtful and intemperate, paſſionate and angry, full of malice, hatred, and revenge; I have been guilty of ſlandering and abuſing, injuring and defrauding of my neighbours; of lewd actions, and obſcene diſcourſes;

courſes; of profane and filthy jeſts; and of frequent curſing, ſwearing, and lying. And more particularly, O Lord, I do moſt ſorrowfully confeſs, and lament before thee, to whom all things are naked and open, that I have moſt grievouſly offended thee---[Here name particulars.]

And beſides the guilt of theſe my ſins, I have greatly increaſed it by the ſins of others. How many have been tempted and perſuaded to ſin againſt thee, either by my advice, encouragement, or ill-example? Alas! I have not only been wicked, very wicked myſelf, but, with ſhame and ſorrow I confeſs it, I have been inſtrumental in making others too; (particularly ---Here again may be named any particular ſin of this nature) Lord, what ſcandal have I brought upon religion, what diſhonour to thy name; what reproach to the chriſtian profeſſion, by theſe my wicked and ſinful practices!

And, what ſhall I now ſay unto thee, O God, whoſe goodneſs I have thus abuſed; whoſe mercies I have ſlighted; whoſe promiſes and threatnings declared in the goſpel, I have rejected? And whoſe judgments I deſpiſed? What hope can I entertain of the merits of a ſaviour, whoſe blood I have, as it were, trampled under foot? Or what comfort can I expect from the kind influences of the ever-bleſſed ſpirit; whoſe motions I have ſo often rejected; whoſe calls and invitations I have ſo long been deaf to, and whom I have ſo often grieved by my wicked and ſinful practices?

Oh! whither ſhall I then fly for ſuccour? Who ſhall deliver me from the wrath of that God,

God, whom I have thus offended? Shall I call upon the mountains to cover me, or the deep to ſwallow me up? Alas! there is nothing can hide me from his all-ſearching eye! O bleſſed ſaviour of the world! Thou alone art my refuge; in thee is all my hope, all my ſupport; and if thou rejecteſt me, I am loſt and undone for ever: Oh! turn not away thy face from me, nor caſt thy ſervant away in diſpleaſure: be thou my advocate with the Father, and let thy blood be the propitiation for my ſins.

And, O moſt merciful Father, thou infinite and compaſſionate lover of ſouls! Who delighteſt not in the death of the wicked, nor deſpiſeſt the tears of a returning ſinner, for the ſake of thy dear ſon, I moſt earneſtly beſeech thee to hear the groans of me a miſerable ſinner, who am ready to ſink under the heavy weight and burden of ſin. Look with pity upon me, I humbly intreat thee, who am not worthy, I confeſs, to lift up my polluted eyes to heaven; my ſins have made me the juſt object of thy wrath, and ſhouldeſt thou now be deaf to all my ſupplications, it would be but a juſt return for my having ſo long refuſed to hearken to thy gracious calls and invitations to repentance. O miſerable wretch that I am! That ever I ſhould thus offend ſo good, ſo merciful a Father; that ever I ſhould make him my enemy, who is the kindeſt, and the beſt of friends; Lord, I condemn my ſelf, and abhor the follies of my paſt life; my fleſh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am horribly afraid of thy judgments; for who can ſtand in thy ſight when thou art angry?

Or

Or who is able to abide the fury of thy wrath? O my God! I have no hope but in that mercy of thine, which thou haſt manifeſted in the redemption of the world, by thy ſon Chriſt Jeſus; that alone is the ſupport of my ſoul under all its ſorrow and anguiſh; in him I know and am aſſured, that thou art a merciful God, full of compaſſion, long-ſuffering, and of great pity; thou ſpareſt when we deſerve puniſhment, and in thy wrath thinkeſt upon mercy: ſpare me therefore, O good Lord, ſpare me, and be not angry with me for ever: waſh away all my ſins in the blood of thy dear ſon, who came into the world to ſave ſinners; and for the ſake of his meritorious death and paſſion, and for all the ſufferings which he underwent for the ſins of the whole world, pardon and forgive, I moſt earneſtly, and moſt unfeignedly beſeech thee, all the ſins and tranſgreſſions of my paſt life; more particularly--------cleanſe thou me, O my God, from all my ſecret and unknown ſins; and O be thou reconciled unto me, and receive me to thy favour, which, though I have hitherto ſo fooliſhly ſlighted, yet I now value and prefer above all the pleaſures of this world. Alas! my luſts and paſſions have for a long time had the dominion over me; they have blinded and ſeduced me; and my whole life has been one continued error and miſtake; but, Lord, thou haſt been pleaſed to open my eyes, when I was juſt at the very brink of deſtruction, and ſhewn me the precipice I was falling into; and now I ſee, and condemn the folly of my paſt life, and am ſenſible, that unleſs thy pity had interpoſed, I muſt

have

have periſhed for ever. O let that infinite love which moved thee to ſo aſtoniſhing a mercy, be ſtill continued to me, a poor, wretched, helpleſs creature; ſhew thou me the path that leads to everlaſting life, and give me ſuch a ſenſe of thy amazing goodneſs to me, that I may never again wander into thoſe ways that lead to death and deſtruction. Take from me, O God, this hardened and corrupt heart, and give me a new heart, new affections, and new deſires, that I may become entirely a new creature, dedicated to thy ſervice, and devoted to thy fear and love.

Give me, O Lord, ſuch an unfeigned repentance of all my paſt ſins, ſuch hatred and abhorence of my former evil ways, that I may from this moment take a final leave of all my beloved luſts and ſinful pleaſures. Give me that humble and contrite ſpirit, whoſe groans thou doſt never refuſe; that faith which overcometh the world, and which will enable me to conquer my own inveterate habits; and that love, which will make me afraid to offend thee, and which will inſpire me with reſolutions active and vigorous, honeſt and ſincere; ſuch, as by the aſſiſtance of thy grace and holy Spirit, may carry me through all difficulties, and be a proof againſt all the temptations of the world, the fleſh and the devil.

O Lord, hear me, O Lord, help me, and have mercy upon me: O Lord, pity and ſave my ſoul for thy truth and mercy's ſake in Jeſus Chriſt. *Amen.* Bleſſed Lord. *Amen.*

Our Father, &c.

Prayers,

Prayers, containing Acts of Contrition and Reſolutions of new Obedience.

I.

I Call my ways to remembrance, O Lord, with a troubled heart; my evil-doings are before my eyes, and are vile and loathſome in my own ſight, becauſe they have made me ſo in thine; they are a burthen upon my ſpirit, a ſore burthen, too heavy for me to bear.

But now, O my God, with a heart ſorrowful and penitent, I turn from my evil ways, reſolving by thy grace to become a new creature; from this day forward I am fully purpoſed to betake myſelf to a religious courſe of life; O! let not iniquity be my ruin.

II.

And from my ſins, O holy Father, which are the ſhame and burden of my life, I turn unto thee, who art the glory and comfort, and ſhalt for ever be the guide and governor thereof. I turn unto thee with a broken and contrite heart, O receive and comfort me, and deſpiſe me not, I beſeech thee, the work of thy own hands. I turn to thee with my whole heart, and make no reſerves, nor will retain any allowance of my former ſins; no, not of thoſe which have been moſt delightful to me, and are hardeſt to be parted with; for if I regard iniquity in my heart, I know thou wilt not hear me; and therefore I will make haſte, and not delay to keep thy commandments.

O

O Lord, I beg no greater mercy than to be found ſtedfaſt in thy ways; nor ſhall account any thing ſo great a happineſs, as that which ſerves to keep me faithful unto thee. I am content that my ways ſhould be hedged up with thorns, with troubles and afflictions, or any thing that is grievous to fleſh and blood, rather than I ſhould ever forſake the paths of righteouſneſs, to wander again after my former vanities; for it is the unfeigned deſire of my heart, and ſhall be the great endeavour of my life, above all things to ſerve and pleaſe thee, and to hold me faſt by thee, who art the faithful guide and keeper of my ſoul; and my earneſt prayer to thee is, that thou wouldſt preſerve me from falling away from thy fear, and forfeiting that mercy which thou haſt promiſed to the returning ſinner.

III.

And having now, by thy grace, O merciful Father, theſe holy thoughts and deſires in my heart, I earneſtly beg of thee, who art the bleſſed author and giver of all grace, that I may never loſe or forget them. I give my heart entirely to thee, and humbly pray, that it may be always in thy hands, ſince it is ſo unconſtant in what is good, and ſo prone to what is evil, when it is in my own keeping. O Father, keep it ſtedfaſt and unmoveable in thy ways; let it not be inclined to any evil thing, nor lean towards my former vanities; keep my eyes from beholding wickedneſs, and my ears from liſtening to the deceitful tempter; let not my lips utter any thing

thing that is evil, nor my feet move a ſtep in the paths of death, but let every member of my body, every faculty of my ſoul, be employed in thy ſervice, till thou bringeſt me to the enjoyment of thy bleſſed ſelf, in that place of bliſs and happineſs, where thou dwelleſt for evermore. Grant this, O moſt merciful God, for the ſake, and through the interceſſion of my deareſt ſaviour Jeſus Chriſt. *Amen.*

IV.

O Lord, I am not worthy to lift up my eyes unto thee; but whither ſhould a wretch in guilt and miſery look, but unto thee, the fountain of all mercy? Whither but to a God, whoſe mercy is greater than our wickedneſs? to a God, whoſe property it is to be kind to his enemies; and whoſe patience to bear our ſins, is as great as his power to puniſh them; and who had much rather be reconciled to us, than take vengeance on us? Whither indeed, but to thee, O God of all grace and comfort, who ſheweſt mercy to the unworthy, and inviteſt us with all the tenderneſs and bowels of a compaſſionate father, to turn from our evil ways, that our ſouls may live, and be for ever happy in thy eternal kingdom.

V.

Encouraged therefore by thy goodneſs, O Lord, I addreſs myſelf unto thee, who am ready to ſink under the heavy load of guilt and miſery: but I make no plea, but for thy mercy; nor have I any pretence to claim it (for, alas! I muſt with ſhame acknowledge, I have much abuſed

abuſed it) but through thy inexpreſſible love, knowing I have a moſt merciful ſaviour, who died to purchaſe ſalvation for us; and who now powerfully intercedes with thee for the pardon of true penitents! O! for his dear ſake, receive me graciouſly to thy mercy, and be not angry with me for ever. Forgive me, O merciful Father, for I am heartily ſorry for all the evils which I have done: forgive all my ſins, for I am fully reſolved, by thy grace, to love and ſerve thee: forgive me, O moſt gracious God, for I forgive all that have offended me, and do intreat thee to forgive them likewiſe. O do not exact puniſhment of me for my ſins; but extend thy mercy and pardon to my ſoul, for my dear redeemer's ſake, Jeſus Chriſt our Lord. *Amen.*

VI.

And having thus utterly renounced my ſins, O holy Father, I deſire above all things to partake of thy righteouſneſs; having defaced and corrupted myſelf, I would fain be made new by thee; having hitherto miſcarried, whilſt I would be in my own hands, I deſire now to be altogether in thine, and never more to wander from thee; and therefore, whatever elſe I loſe, my earneſt and longing prayer is, that I may recover thy likeneſs, and be made conformable to thy will in all things, through Jeſus Chriſt my bleſſed ſaviour and redeemer. *Amen.*

VII.

I know, O gracious Lord, that I cannot receive this, but from thyſelf; O therefore be thou

thou both the bleſſed giver, and the gift: I confeſs that I am utterly unworthy to have thy divine image ſtamped upon my ſoul, but alas! I extremely need it, and extremely value it; and I dearly love thee, O my God, or elſe I ſhould not be thus deſirous to be like thee.

Hear me therefore, O gracious Father, and breathe into my heart that ſpirit which renews us after thine own image, in righteouſneſs and true holineſs.

Bleſſed Jeſus, who ſeekeſt out ſinners to make them good, do not reject me now, when I ſeek after thee to make me better. I am poor and naked, Oh! clothe me with thy righteouſneſs; my good thoughts are changeable and unconſtant; but Oh! do thou ſtabliſh and fix them by thy grace: ſet up thy kingdom, O Jeſu, in my heart; for to become thy faithful ſervant is more to me than to have the empire of this world. Keep me ſtedfaſt in ſerving thee, till thou takeſt me finally to enjoy thee.

VIII.

O Saviour of the world! ſave me, who by thy croſs and paſſion haſt redeemed me: help me, and ſave me, I beſeech thee, O my God.

IX.

Grant, O Lord, that at all times I may account my ſins to be my ſhame, and make thy laws to be my rule, and thy bleſſed will in every thing my choice and ſatisfaction. O let thy promiſes be my hope, thy providence my guard, thy

thy grace my ſtrength, and thy bleſſed ſelf my portion both now and evermore. *Amen.*

X.

The Lord bleſs me and keep me; the Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon me; the Lord give me peace, even that peace of his, which paſſeth all underſtanding, through the merits and meditation of my dear redeemer Jeſus Chriſt our Lord; to whom, with the Father, and the eternal Spirit, be all honour, glory, love, ſervice, and obedience, throughout all ages. *Amen. Our Father*, &c.

IT may be convenient before you proceed any farther, to read and meditate on ſuch portions of ſcripture as you find yourſelf moſt affected with; or to conſider the nature and attributes of God; or the fall and miſerable ſtate of man and his redemption by Jeſus Chriſt; or to meditate on ſuch particular duties as you find yourſelf to have been defective in; or on the rewards promiſed to good men, and on the puniſhments denounced againſt the wicked, as theſe things are laid down in the holy ſcriptures, which are our only infallible guide; on which occaſion, the book intitled, "The Chriſtian Inſtitutes, or the ſincere Word of God," will be very uſeful, as it contains the whole faith and duty of a chriſtian, digeſted under proper heads, and delivered in the words of ſcripture, ſo that the reader may find there together thoſe ſcriptures which may concern any article of faith, or particular duty, together with the ſcripture-motives for the practice thereof. After the devout chriſtian has ſpent ſome little time in reading and meditation, as aforeſaid, he may uſe the following prayers, if his intention is to approach the Lord's table.

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OFFICE

FOR THE

HOLY COMMUNION.

A PREPARATION for communicating worthily, conſiſting of very devout Prayers.

Of the Reverence due to this Holy Sacrament.

The INVITATION.

COME unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will refreſh you. The bread that I will give is my fleſh; which I will give for the life of the world. Take, eat, this is my body which is given for you; this do in remembrance of me. He that eateth my fleſh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. The words which I ſpeak unto you, they are ſpirit, and they are life.

The Prayer.

THESE, bleſſed Jeſus, are thy words, on which my ſoul ſecurely reſts itſelf, becauſe my ſaviour, who is eternal truth, hath ſpoken them: theſe the gracious and condeſcending invitations, which I find ſcattered in holy ſcripture, as occaſions offered for making them. Theſe there-

therefore I will receive with holy gratitude, with humble but entire confidence; and grave them up upon my ſoul in deep and indelable characters. For though they be thine, as the author; yet do I claim a property in them, and juſtly call them mine too, as a perſon, for whoſe benefit and ſalvation thou wert pleaſed to utter them. Moſt gladly therefore will I receive them at thy mouth, that the authority of the divine ſpeaker may make the more effectual impreſſion. And ſtupid I muſt be beyond imagination, if encouragement ſo good, ſo kind, do not awaken, and very ſenſibly affect me. But, alas! at the time that thy call inclines me to come, my own grievous tranſgreſſions fly in my face, and the terrors of a guilty conſcience keep me away. Thy goodneſs, I own, imps my wings, and bids me boldly attempt the raiſing my ſoul to heaven and happineſs; but I feel the bitter remembrance of my ſins, checking thoſe flights, laying me proſtrate upon earth, reproaching my better hopes, and nobler intentions, with preſumption; and even weighing down my mind, with the intolerable burden of heinous numberleſs offences, which render me unworthy of the leaſt of all thy mercies.

In this perplexity of thought thou haſt moſt ſeaſonably interpoſed with thy reviving comforts; haſt made that faith and truſt a virtue and a duty, which I ſhould have ſhunned as a crime, and, conſcious of my own vileneſs, durſt not have entertained: thou bidſt me raiſe my dejected looks, and direct my ſteps to heaven; and I ſeriouſly deſire, (as who indeed can but deſire?)

ſire?) life and glory. Thou exhorteſt me to begin to live immediately, by taking the ſweet foretaſtes of immortality, in that bread, which is the food of ſouls. Thy kind invitation therefore I greedily attend to, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will refreſh you." O charming ſound in the ears of a ſinner! How joyful is the news to a poor, loſt, impotent wretch! One, who, in a due ſenſe of his own vileneſs, thinks even the meaneſt of thy gifts, which conduce to his bodily ſuſtenance, too good for him. To be invited to eat of thy moſt bleſſed body, and admitted to partake of the lively figures of thy divine blood, the commemorations of thy death, and ſure pledges of ſalvation! Lord! what am I, that I ſhould thus be ſuffered to approach thee? Nay, rather, that thou ſhouldſt come to me, and dwell under my roof? O unſpeakable condeſcenſion! O unexampled kindneſs! Behold the heaven, the heaven of heavens, cannot contain thee, and yet thou vouchſafeſt to take up thy abode with man, that is a worm! The angels are not pure in thy ſight, and yet thou ſayeſt to wretched ſinners, "Come unto me, ye that travel, and are heavy laden."

I find myſelf at a loſs, whence ſuch aſtoniſhing kindneſs ſhould proceed, or what may be the meaning of ſo friendly an invitation. My miſdeeds teſtify againſt me, and I am but too ſenſible, that no merit of mine could induce my Lord to make it. So far from that, that even now it is made, I know not with what face I can either approach my God and Saviour, or bring him to me, or hope to keep him there;

him, whom I have ſo often grievouſly provoked, ſo juſtly made my enemy for ever. But were there no demerits of my own to diſcourage this attempt, yet who am I, that the majeſty of heaven and earth ſhould ſtoop ſo low, as to enter under my roof? Behold angels and archangels, principalities and powers, fall down and worſhip thee; behold the brighteſt ſaints, and ſpirits of juſt men made perfect, tremble at thy preſence, and yet thou ſayeſt, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden." Had this been ſpoke by any mouth but thine, men could not have believed it. Had not thy own command inſpired this confidence, ſinners durſt not have attempted to move towards thee, but would have rather uſed their utmoſt induſtry, to flee from the preſence of their maſter and judge. But, be it ſo, we are commanded to come to thee, and thou vouchſafeſt to come to us. Yet what ſolemnity, what preparation, can be ſufficient for thy reception?

O mighty maker of the world! whom, though we plainly ſee in all thy works of wonder, yet thou thyſelf remaineſt inviſible; how aſtoniſhing are thy diſpenſations to the ſons of men? How ſweet, how comfortable, how full of efficacy, yet ſtill how unaccountable to ſenſe and reaſon, are the methods, by which thou art pleaſed to communicate thyſelf to the faithful in this bleſſed ſacrament? Bleſſed Jeſus! we will acknowledge thy unſpeakable bounty; we will moſt thankfully confeſs thee to be the good ſhepherd, who haſt provided ſuch rich ſuſtenance for thy ſheep, and leadeſt them out into fat paſtures. Bleſſed be

thy

thy eternal mercy, who vouchſafeſt to give thy body, not only for, but to, thy poor ſervants in this diſconſolate ſtate: who, not content to ſacrifice it once upon the croſs, offereſt it daily in the ſacrament; and haſt ſilenced all the fears and melancholy miſgivings of our own guilt and unworthineſs, by that moſt tender and compaſſionate, that moſt extenſive and univerſal invitation; "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavily laden," with the burden of your ſins, "and I will refreſh you."

The Love of God to the Soul manifeſted in this Sacrament.

BEhold, Lord, thus encouraged, thus invited, I come; but I do not preſume to do ſo, truſting in my own righteouſneſs, but in thy manifold and great mercies. I feel, alas! my weakneſs and wants; and betake myſelf to thee for relief; ſick and diſeaſed, I fly to the phyſician of ſouls; hungry and thirſty, to this fountain of living water, and bread of life; poor and needy, to the bountiful king of heaven; a ſervant to his maſter; a creature to his compaſſionate creator, who hates nothing that he hath made; and a forlorn diſconſolate wretch, to thee, the holy, the eternal, the only comforter. But whence is this to me, that my God ſhould vouchſafe to come unto me? Or how canſt thou, who art of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, endure to make ſuch condeſcending approaches, to a ſoul polluted with ſin and with uncleaneſs? Thou ſeeſt my very inward parts, and knoweſt I have nothing in me that is good, nothing to in-

vite ſuch mercy, nothing fit for reception of ſo pure, ſo glorious a majeſty. I will therefore moſt humbly confeſs my own vileneſs, and thy unſpeakable goodneſs; I will moſt thankfully praiſe, admire, and adore, thy marvellous love, and exceeding abundant grace. For this is purely thy own act. Nothing on my part could deſerve, nothing could move thee to it. The more unworthy I am, the more conſpicuous is thy goodneſs, the more amazing thy mercy and condeſcenſion. Since therefore thou art pleaſed to ſtoop ſo low, be it unto me according to thy word. Since thou haſt thought fit to commend my approach, I will moſt gladly teſtify my ready obedience, and only beg, that my own ſinfulneſs may not render me odious in thy ſight, nor fruſtrate theſe ineſtimable mercies to me.

O bleſſed, kindeſt ſaviour, what humble reverence, what devout thankfulneſs can be great enough? What praiſe can be ſufficiently expreſſive of that love, which admits ſo poor, ſo miſerable a wretch, to the participation of thoſe divine myſteries, the dignity whereof no tongue of men and angels can worthily ſet forth? But when I thus addreſs my Lord, and am allowed ſuch intimate familiarities with him, what ſort of reflections ought to fill my breaſt? To approach thee with all the profound reſpect due upon ſuch occaſions, is impoſſible: I will therefore ſupply my want of ability by the earneſtneſs of my zeal; and moſt humbly beſeech thee, to accept thoſe hearty deſires of the ineſtimable benefit, by which my ſoul, and all its faculties

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thirſt and pant moſt impatiently after thee and thy righteouſneſs. When thou art the ſubject of my meditations, the matter is too vaſt for regular thought; the idea too dazling bright for a finite underſtanding; and I quickly feel myſelf loſt in wonder and aſtoniſhment. I will therefore turn my eyes inward, and entertain myſelf with the leſs pleaſing indeed, but no leſs profitable proſpect of my own unworthineſs; laying my ſoul low before thee; and from the ſenſe, how little, how mere nothing, how much worſe than nothing I am, will take the meaſure of thy greatneſs, and form ideas of thy infinite goodneſs. I praiſe thee, O my God, from the bottom of my heart; and extol thy name for evermore. I deſpiſe and deteſt myſelf; and with the deepeſt humility put my ſoul into thy hands, that thy favour and grace may exalt me, and make this deſpicable wretch ſomething, who, without thy mercy is leſs than nothing.

O the wide extremes! O the unmeaſurable diſtance! between God, the eſſence and perfection of holineſs, and man, the very abſtract of filth and ſin! yet doth this God extend compaſſion, and look down with pity, on thoſe who are not worthy ſo much as to lift up their eyes to him. Yet does he come to us, delight to be with us, promiſe to dwell with us; call and intreat and importune us, to ſit and eat deliciouſly with him. He invites the naked and hungry, the beggars and vagabonds, to his own table; feeds them with "angels food," feaſts them with the bread of heaven, even that "living bread

which came down from heaven," on purpoſe "to give life unto the world."

Oh! whence could all his mighty love proceed? What account can be given of ſuch wonderful condeſcenſion, ſuch tender regards, to loſt unworthy creatures? What thanks, what praiſe, what humble adoration do thoſe ſo highly obliged, ſo particularly favoured creatures owe in return for them? How wiſe, how ſaving, was thy deſign in the firſt inſtitution of this holy ſupper? How rich, how delightful a banquet haſt thou prepared for thy gueſts, by ordering thy own body and blood for the myſtical entertainment of the faithful? How aſtoniſhing are the operations of thy grace and power? How incomprehenſible the methods of fulfilling thy moſt true promiſe? Thou ſpeakeſt the word in the beginning, and all things were created; and by the ſame almighty word, thou commandeſt bread and wine, and they nouriſh ſouls to life eternal.

Come then, O Lord, and enter, and live, and reign in me for ever; cleanſe and adorn with thy grace the place of thy peculiar reſidence; preſerve my heart and body free from all impurity, and remove far away whatever may be offenſive to holy eyes; let this veſſel of mine be conſtantly poſſeſſed in ſanctification and honour; that with a peaceful and ſpotleſs conſcience, I may frequently approach, and eagerly receive theſe adorable myſteries, which thou haſt appointed for the comfort and ſalvation of thoſe, whom the king of heaven delights to honour; and for devout and lively commemoration

tion of thy own moſt bitter, but moſt meritorious and precious death.

And thou, my ſoul, rejoice and be exceeding glad for ſo noble a favour, ſo heavenly a refreſhment, ſo rich a conſolation, to ſupport and ſweeten thy paſſage, through this vale of tears and miſery. For every time thou attendeſt theſe holy myſteries, thou "doſt ſpiritually eat the fleſh of Chriſt and drink his blood;" thou doſt act as it were over again the work of thy redemption, and with great effect partake of thy ſaviour's merits and ſufferings.

The Benefit of communicating often.

BEHOLD, I come to thee, O Lord, deſirous to partake of thy promiſe, to be enriched with thy gifts, and feaſted with that heavenly banquet which thy compaſſion hath prepared for hungry and drooping ſouls. I know, O Lord, in thee is all I need, all I can deſire; my health and ſafety, my hope and ſtrength, my honour and glory. Quicken therefore, and cheriſh the ſoul of thy ſervant, for unto thee, O bleſſed Jeſus, do I lift up my ſoul. It is my earneſt longing to receive thee with a becoming reverence and devotion. The height of my ambition is to bring thee home to my houſe; and, with Zaccheus of old, to be bleſſed, and reckoned by thee among the true ſpiritual ſons of Abraham. My ſoul deſires to be fed and ſtrengthened by thy body, and my heart to be entirely knit, and inſeparably united to thee.

Give me but thyſelf, and, whatever elſe thou with-holdeſt, I am ſatisfied. For all things be-

ſides are miſerable comforters, and rather aggravate than abate my wretchedneſs. Without thy conſolations, I am not able to ſubſiſt: and therefore I feel an abſolute neceſſity of coming to thee often, for freſh ſupplies of grace and ſtrength. My ſpirits languiſh and ſink, and, if I faſt too long, I periſh for want of ſeaſonable recruits from this heavenly ſuſtenance. Thy bowels heretofore yearned over the multitudes, who came from far to hear thy ſaving doctrine, and to be healed of their bodily diſtempers. Thou wouldſt not ſend them away empty, but wer't pleaſed to feed them by a miracle, leſt they ſhould faint by the way. Extend the ſame compaſſion towards me, and let this ſacrament ſuſtain my fainting ſoul, in this wilderneſs barren and remote from any true comfort. For thou art the ſweet, the reviving food of ſinking and weary ſpirits; and they, who worthily partake of this repaſt, are nouriſhed unto life eternal.

How amazing is thy love! And what is man whom thou thus vouchſafeſt to viſit, when the great God, the creator of the world, and father of the ſpirits of all fleſh, does not diſdain to deſcend into a poor ſoul, and fill the hungry wretch with all his fatneſs? Happy that breaſt, which is thus honoured, and unſpeakable the joy, with which it overflows! How glorious a maſter, how agreeable a gueſt, how pleaſant a companion, how faithful a friend, how beautiful, how honourable, how charming a huſband, does it entertain and embrace! Let heaven and earth, and all their boaſted excellencies, keep ſilence before him: for if I have my Jeſus, I have all. For

I have him, from whom all other things derive their excellence; and their borrowed precarious perfections can miniſter no joy, can make no happineſs, without this great original. They in themſelves are nothing, they are but what he made them; and he alone is more, incomparably more and better, than all that ever was, or could be made.

The Pleaſures of Devout Communion.

PRevent me, I moſt humbly beſeech thee, my Lord and my God, with the bleſſings and graces of thy holy Spirit; that thy ſervant may taſte thy ſweetneſs, and approach thy precious feaſt, with ſuch reverence, and zeal, and fervent devotion, as thou wilt be pleaſed to accept. O viſit me with thy ſalvation, and awaken me from ſpiritual ſloth and ſlumber; that I now may vigorouſly apply myſelf, to draw and drink the living water, contained in this fountain opened for ſin and for uncleanneſs. Enlighten the eyes of my mind, that I may ſee the wonderous things of this thy inſtitution, and ſtrengthen my faith, that I may firmly, and without ſcruple, believe and expect thoſe operations which my reaſon is not able to account for. Shed I pray thee, thy ſpecial grace into my heart, that I may diſſolve in this holy fire, and become entirely thine. Purge off my droſs, and let me no more endure the allay of any baſer mixtures. For this ſacrament is the pureſt, the nobleſt refiner of ſouls, the health of the whole man, the reſtorative of ſpiritual decays, the cure of vice, the curb of paſſions, the antidote againſt troubles and temptations, the conveyancer of greater

grace, the increaſe of imperfect virtue, the ſtay of hope, the ſupport of our faith, and the mighty incentive of our charity. Thou O God! art a fountain ever full, ever overflowing. Thou art the fire whoſe flames are conſtantly expanding themſelves, to kindle holy affections, in all thoſe who are careful to approach, and put themſelves in the way of their activity.

It may be, I am not worthy to drink at the head of this ſpring, or to take my fill of its refreſhing ſtreams, but yet at leaſt I will apply my mouth to ſome of its diſtant pipes, and ſpreading rills, to catch a few of the drops as they ſlide by, that I be not utterly barren, nor die with drought and thirſt. I may not be able to approach this flame ſo near, that it ſhould refine and brighten me to a degree equal with purity of the cherubim and ſeraphim: but yet I will not deſpair of being ſo far cheriſhed and warmed by it, that my zeal may be exalted according to the brightneſs of human virtues: and my enlivened heart ſhall feel ſome glowings, if it do not flame out heavenly clear. Defects and infirmities, I know, I cannot be exempted from: but, what is wanting, I beg my merciful Jeſus would ſupply.

Into thy Hands, my merciful maker and ſaviour, I commit myſelf, and all my affairs; and beg, that thou wouldeſt keep what is thus depoſited with thee, ſafe unto life eternal. O take me therefore into thy cuſtody; and, as thou haſt ordained thy body and blood to be the food of immortality, ſo grant that it may have its proper efficacy upon my ſoul in particular, to the glory of thy name, and the honour of ſo bleſſed

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an inſtitution. And that no neglect or unfruitfulneſs of mine may obſtruct its kindly and powerful operations; grant, I beſeech thee, my God and Saviour, that I never may be guilty of ſuch diſreſpect, as wilfully to turn my back upon thy table; but may earneſtly long for, heartily rejoice in, and diligently comply with, every opportunity of receiving this mighty bleſſing; and may ſo frequent and ſo improve under thy merciful diſpenſation, that I may conſtantly return with greater care and zeal, more ſettled reſolutions, more irreconcileable hatred againſt ſin, and more fervent love for God and goodneſs, than before. So ſhall I approach nearer to thee indeed, and each ſacrament prove a freſh advance towards heaven. So ſhall my ſoul be filled with treaſures of thy mercy, the delights of thy ſecret ones, and the raviſhing foretaſtes of that bliſs, which ſhall be always growing, till it be conſummated at laſt in that eternal feaſt above, the marriage-ſupper of the lamb in thy kingdom. *Amen.*

An Act of Preparation before the Sacrament.

BEHOLD, Lord, with thy wonted mercy the doubts and confuſions of my troubled breaſt. For, when I look up to heaven, and conſider the majeſty of my great, my holy God, and from thence draw my eyes back upon myſelf, and view my own vileneſs and horrible ſinfulneſs, I am all perplexity, and diſtraction, and horror. Thou biddeſt me come; and if I refuſe or neglect to comply with that gracious invitation, I forſake thy own mercy, and deprive myſelf of life and happineſs. But if I come unworthily

worthily, I am equally miſerable, and ſhall be puniſhed for the high indignity of bringing ſo polluted a gueſt, to ſo pure and heavenly a feaſt. What courſe then ſhall I take to be ſafe, when danger and death threaten on either hand? I will even fly to thee, my God; and, inſtead of conſulting with fleſh and blood, or hearkening to the deceitful inſinuations of my too raſh, or too timorous reaſon, will aſk counſel of thee, my infalliable and only oracle in difficulties, my never-failing help in neceſſities and diſtreſſes.

Teach me, I beſeech thee, the right way, and lead me in ſuch methods of holy preparation, as may be proper and ſuitable to ſo exalted an act of religion. I know that theſe approaches to thee, in the bleſſed ſacrament, are exceeding beneficial and delightful: but make me know withal, in what manner thou muſt be approached, to render that which is deſirable in itſelf, ſafe and profitable to me in particular. Give me, I beſeech thee, a due ſenſe of the greatneſs of the miſtery and excellence of thy mercy in it; and, conſequent to that, fill my ſoul with pure and holy affections, with earneſt longings, with godly ſorrow, with ſincere and ſtedfaſt reſolutions, with profound reverence and ardent devotion, that my heart may be a clean, though homely receptacle for my ſaviour, ſuch as he will not diſdain, and I ſo well diſpoſed a gueſt at this divine feaſt, this ſpiritual ſacrifice, that thou mayeſt bid me welcome to thy table, and the food I receive there may nouriſh me up to health and life eternal. *Amen.*

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An Act of Self-Reſignation.

"IT is very meet, right, and my bounden duty," that I ſhould do, O Lord, as thou requireſt; for this, O Lord, is but to give thee of thy own. Heaven and earth are thine, and all that therein is. I deſire, with ſingleneſs of heart, to dedicate myſelf to thee, never to retract the gift, but continue thine for ever. Accept me therefore, entirely devoted to thy ſervice from this day forward, a ſacrifice of praiſe and perpetual thankſgiving. I call thoſe bleſſed ſpirits to witneſs, who though invinſible to human eyes, conſtantly aſſiſt at our ſolemn acts of religious worſhip; humble beſeeching thee, that the oblation of thy dear ſon's bleſſed body, repreſented in this ſacrament may be effectual for the ſalvation of me, and of all thy faithful people.

I offer to thee, O Lord, my manifold ſins and tranſgreſſions, my corrupt inclinations and vicious habits, which, from my youth up until now, have ſo grievouſly provoked thy wrath and juſt indignation, to be a whole burnt ſacrifice. Slay them, O Lord, before thy altar, and conſume them in the fire of thy love, that not any the leaſt ſpot of guilt may remain behind. Purge my conſcience from their ſtain, and wipe out their very remembrance. Reſtore to me thy grace, which my ſins and wilful neglects have ſo often forfeited. Give "me the comfort of thy help again, and eſtabliſh me with thy free," thy renewing, ſpirit, and having ſealed a full pardon for what is paſt, receive me to thy fatherly embraces,

braces, and aſſure me of thy affection, by a kiſs of reconciliation and peace.

What ſatisfaction can I make for all my injuries and bold affronts to thy righteous laws, but that alone of humble confeſſion, deep ſorrow, and hearty prayers, for thy acceptance of thy ſon's atonement? I do moſt heartily bewail and deteſt all my wickedneſs, and by thy grace will never be guilty of the like any more. I do, and will to the laſt minute of my life, grieve for theſe follies; and am deſirous, by my future carriage, to teſtify the truth of my repentance, and make the beſt reparation I am able, for the ſcandal I have given formerly. O Lord, pardon; O Lord, forgive; defer not for thy own ſake, O my God; but let thy mercy be glorified in ſparing the ſoul of thy ſervant, whom thou haſt redeemed with thy moſt precious blood. Behold, I commit myſelf wholly to thy mercy, and depoſite my ſpirit in thy hands. O deal with me according to thy great goodneſs, and not after my ſins and grievous wickedneſs.

To thee I humbly offer all in me that is good. A very poor imperfect offering, I with ſhame confeſs it; but, worthleſs as it is, I beg thou wilt accept it. Supply my defects, ſanctify and exalt what is debaſed with infirmity or impure mixtures; diſdain not my ſincere, though weak, endeavours; enable me daily to do better; and raiſe at laſt this ſlothful unprofitable creature to ſuch degrees of virtue and ſucceſsful activity, as may by the more diligent uſe of thy grace, end in a bleſſed and bright eternity.

I alſo offer up to thee the prayers and good wiſhes of all that have interceded for me, or deſired my interceſſions for them; the neceſſities and diſtreſſes of my friends and relations, and all that have done good to me or others, for thy ſake; imploring that thou wouldſt aſſiſt them by thy grace, comfort them in their troubles, protect them in all dangers, deliver them from puniſhment and death eternal, and ſo reſcue them from all evil, that they may magnify thy good providence, and with thankful hearts rejoice in thy mercy.

In, a more particular manner accept, I beſeech thee, my moſt hearty prayer and peace-offerings, for all who have injured me in word or deed, created me any diſturbance by ill treatment, ſlandered or reviled me with ill language, or given me any manner of uneaſineſs, or angry reſentment. And likewiſe for all whom I have injured, grieved or offended, by word or deed, knowingly or ignorantly, with or without deſign; intreating thy forgiveneſs for all that hath been done or taken amiſs on either ſide. Take away, thou who livedeſt and diedeſt for thy enemies, all rancour and malice, all grudges and revengeful thoughts, all paſſionate remembrances and diſpoſition to ſtrife and debate, all that may be inconſiſtent with true charity, or tend to the decay of brotherly love. Have mercy, Lord, on all who ſue for mercy; ſupply the needs of all that want; and grant us all ſuch meaſures of thy grace, and ſuch firm perſeverrance in it, that we may grow up to ſuch degrees as this mortal ſtate is capable of here,

and

and may receive our perfect conſummation and bliſs, both in body and ſoul, in thy eternal and everlaſting glory.

The Benefit of Chriſt's Body and Word.

O Bleſſed, deareſt Jeſus! Who can expreſs the charms, the tranſports, of that ſoul, which feaſts with thee at thy table; that table, where no common food is placed, but the divine entertainment of thy own body and blood? An entertainment delicious, above all that man can expreſs or imagine! What ſatisfaction ſhould we take, to come into thy tabernacle, and fall low on our knees before thy footſtool; to open wide our hearts for the delights of thy houſe, and, with Mary Magdalen, to waſh thy holy feet with tears of love? But where, alas! is this devotion to be found? Where are thoſe eyes overflowing with pious ſorrow? Or, if that ſorrow be ſwallowed up in joy, yet ought we not even thus to approach thee with dry eyes; but tears of joy ſhould trickle down apace, when we conſider our mighty privilege, and the happineſs of being admitted to thy bleſſed preſence, and made partakers of the bliſs of angels. For, as they really behold thy face in glory, ſo am I ſure to ſee, and to receive thee, in the miſtic elements; though covered there under a different form, and ſhrouded in a veil of bread and wine.

I adore thy goodneſs, which thus condeſcends to the infirmities of human nature, and in much compaſſion is pleaſed, under theſe ſenſible repreſentations, to hide that glorious majeſty, whoſe

whoſe native luſtre is too piercing bright, for me, or any created being, to behold in its full ſtrength. All honour, and praiſe, and thankſgiving, be to the bleſſed Jeſus, light of eternal uncreated light, for the table of his heavenly doctrine, ſpread and adorned by the miniſtry of his inſpired ſervants, the prophets, apoſtles, and other holy writers, taught by himſelf, that they might teach us. All glory and thanks be to the great creator and merciful redeemer of mankind, for his extenſive tender love, in preparing a plenteous feaſt for all the world. Not like that paſchal lamb of old, a type and ſhadow only, but the very ſubſtance of that ſhadow, the accompliſhment of that type, even Chriſt our paſſover, ſacrificed for us, and exhibited to us. This bread ſuſtains, this cup chears and rejoices, the hearts of the faithful. It fills them with the overflowing delights of paradiſe, is a pledge and antipaſt of heaven, and, allowing for the difference of conditions, admits us into partnerſhip with angels themſelves. The joy of both is the ſame, though both cannot receive in equal proportion.

The Soul's Deſire of Union with Chriſt.

I Hear thy gracious words, my deareſt Lord, and eaſily believe the inexpreſſible happineſs of them whoſe ſouls thy heavenly preſence fills. But how, oh! how ſhall I attain that bliſs? How ſhall I ſeek and find my God alone? Now open my heart to entertain thee, ſo as to exclude all other intruding gueſts? Oh! that no man, no creature, might from henceforth find place in my

my affections and desires, so as to interrupt my conversation with thee! When shall I break loose from company and care, and enjoy and talk with thee alone, in language free and kind, as that of dearest friends; and soft and tender, sweet and charming, as the unreserved retirements and endearing whispers of the most passionate lovers? This is my earnest wish, this my constant prayer, that my heart may be knit entirely to thee, and weaned from every earthly and sensual delight, learn to taste heavenly and eternal joys, by frequent returns to thy holy communion. Ah! when, my God, shall I be wholly thine, regardless of myself, swallowed up quite in a blissful indissolute union with Christ. "Thou, Lord, in me, and I in thee," and thus may we continue one for ever!

Thou verily art my beloved, my chosen, the chiefest among ten thousand, the friend of my bosom, with whom I desire to dwell all the days of my life. Thou art my peace, and only comfort; without thee I find nothing but labour and sorrow, vexation and torment, and misery insupportable. Thou art a "God that hidest thyself," not dealing thy blessings promiscuously, but with wise and just distinction, satisfying the humble and meek with the pleasures of thy word, while thou concealest thy counsel from the wicked, and leavest them to groan and howl, in the anguish and horror of their guilty souls. Oh! how great is thy bounty! how sweet thy mercy! who refreshest thy hungry servants with the delicious bread which came down from heaven, that thy faithful might eat

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thereof and not die. Surely there is no nation under heaven which hath God ſo near to them, as the Lord our God is unto us, in all that we call upon him for; for "he healeth the broken in heart, he hath reſpect unto the lowly, he lifteth the ſimple out of the duſt, and raiſeth the needy from the dunghill, to ſet them with princes," to equal them with angels; nay, to give them his fleſh for the ſatisfying of their hunger, and, when they are thirſty, the wine of his blood to drink.

What ſociety of men can boaſt of privileges worthy to be named with thoſe of the chriſtian church? What creature is there under heaven, whoſe excellence and happineſs is comparable to that of the pious and devout ſoul, where God takes up his reſidence, and ſuſtains the heart that entertains him with his own glorious body? O grace unſpeakable! O condeſcenſion moſt amazing! O love unmeaſurable! Lord, what is man, that thou ſhouldſt thus viſit him? Or what can he render unto his God for theſe ineſtimable benefits? Alas! I have no return to make, but a poor worthleſs heart. And this is yet a farther inſtance of thy goodneſs, that thou expecteſt no other teſtimony of gratitude but myſelf, and my ſincere affection. Thus haſt thou made our duty our greateſt happineſs: for then ſhall my ſoul be glad, and all that is within me leap for joy, when my heart is perfectly united to God. Then ſhalt thou ſay, "if thou wilt be mine, I will live and dwell with thee for ever:" and I with humble joy reply, "diſdain not, Lord, this mean and homely dwelling, for I moſt willingly,

moſt

moſt thankfully, embrace the offer. Lo! I am thine entirely from this moment, and, above all things wiſh and pray, that the intimacy and friendſhip thus contracted, may continue firm and inviolable, that nothing may abate our love, and the delights of it, or ever part our perſons any more."

An Act of exciting Devotion by the example of Others.

"O How plentiful is thy goodneſs, which thou haſt laid up for them that fear thee!" When I reflect with what ardent piety, with what affectionate devotion, and with what an eager zeal, thy ſaints approach this heavenly ſupper; ſhame and confuſion over-whelm me quite, conſcious of my own, but lukewarm at the beſt, and too often perfectly ſtupid and frozen hearted; with what indifference and coldneſs I approach thy myſteries, and how unaffected with thy mercies, how unprofitable under the gracious diſpenſation, I return. What a reproach is it, that my heart ſhould not be all inflamed with the exceſs of thy love; that I ſhould have no ſenſe, no apprehenſion, of my greateſt happineſs, no hungrings and thirſtings after it? But, notwithſtanding the moving examples of many excellent perſons, ſhould ſtill continue void of all impreſſion; ſo ſcandalouſly unlike thoſe pious ſouls, whoſe zeal overflowed in tears of joy, whoſe hearts, as well as mouths, drank greedily at this fountain of life, whoſe appetites were ſo ſtrong as never to be ſatisfied till they had filled themſelves with thy bleſſed body, and fed liberally, and with a ſort of holy luxury indulged, at the celeſtial banquet.

A

A faith ſo eager, ſo exalted, plainly confeſſed they felt thy gracious preſence, and that their Lord was known to them, as heretofore to the diſciples at Emmaus, in breaking of bread, the burning of their hearts within them, was an irrefragable teſtimony of it. But how far ſhort, alas! do I come of their zeal and devotion? Look mercifully, Lord, upon my infirmities; and, if an equal portion of thy grace be too great a favour for thy poor unworthy ſervant: yet grant me ſuch a degree, ſuch a ſenſe of thy goodneſs and wonderful love, that I may be as ſincerely, though not ſo ſtrongly, affected with it. If raptures and extaſies of delight may not be my portion, yet deny me not improvement: but let my faith be ſtrengthened, my hope confirmed, my love ſo warmed with this ſacrament, that, after having once taſted this heavenly manna, I may never more deſire the onions and garlick of Egypt, nor in my heart turn back from ſo good a God.

I know thy mercy and thy power, to which nothing is impoſſible, nothing hard. I know thou canſt, and I hope in thy good time thou wilt, viſit me with more abundant meaſures of thy grace, and fulfil all my deſire. This confidence I cheriſh, becauſe my very deſires are from thee. And it is ſome comfort to me, that, though I am ſenſible of my weakneſs and my want, yet I long and pant after ſupplies and ſtrength; that I am not content with my miſery, but labour and pray, againſt my defects, and would fain be better. And thus I will continue to do, till thou remove, and vanquiſh my frailties, inſpire a bright

bright and ardent zeal, and make me a happy partaker, firſt of the virtuous diſpoſition of thy devouter ſaints, and then of their reward and happineſs.

A Prayer for Relief in our Wants and Spiritual Diſtreſſes.

HEAR me, O bleſſed, kindeſt Jeſus, whom I now approach with moſt hearty deſires of receiving thee into my ſoul. But how can I expect, that thou wilt not deſpiſe a place ſo unfit to entertain thy pure, thy glorious majeſty? Thou knoweſt, Lord, my weakneſſes and my wants; how great my ſufferings, and how black my ſins; how I am oppreſſed and afflicted, tempted and over-powered; diſordered with paſſion, and ſtained with pollution. To thee I fly for ſuccour againſt my infirmites, for phyſick againſt my diſeaſes, for ſupport under my calamities and diſtreſſes. I cannot diſſemble my condition, I need not publiſh it, when addreſſing one who knows all things, to whom my very inward parts are naked and open; to him, who alone can give effectual relief to my ſorrows, and ſupply my crying neceſſities. Thy wiſdom knows what ſuccours are moſt ſeaſonable and proper for my circumſtances, and how very ſlender and low my ſtock of virtue is. Behold, I ſtand before thee, a helpleſs creature, "miſerable and poor, and blind, and naked, and weak." Imploring thy grace, or at leaſt ſome fragments of it, to this hungry ſtarving beggar. O let me not be famiſhed, but revive this ſinking wretch with ſome crumbs of heavenly ſuſtenance. Let me

not

not periſh with cold, but warm me with thy love: let me not fall into the pit, but enlighten my blind eyes with the ſhine of thy gracious preſence. Give me a ſettled diſreliſh of worldly pleaſures, and make all here below inſipid, and bitter to me. Reconcile me to croſſes and afflictions, by ſubmiſſion and ſteady patience; and leſſen every thing in this world, whether enjoyment or ſuffering, by teaching me to deſpiſe and forget it. Raiſe my ſtupid heart up to heaven, and ſettle my affections there, that they may no longer wildly rove after the trifling objects of fleſh and ſenſe. Let me henceforth taſte delight in nothing but thee, nor "ſpend my money and labour for that which is not bread," for thou alone art "meat indeed, and drink indeed," my love and joy, my delight and exceeding great reward, my perfect and ſole good.

O that, now I am approaching to the throne of grace, thou wouldſt command thy divine fires to deſcend from heaven into my ſoul! O that my ſins and corrupt diſpoſitions might be the burnt-offering conſumed by it! that it might flame and burn, and melt me down, purge away all my droſs, and, by the violence of its powerful heat, refine, and change, and incorporate me with thyſelf. Let me not, I beſeech thee, be ſent empty away: let me not return hungry and thirſty from ſo ſplended an entertainment, but work in me mightily, and deal bountifully with thy ſervant, as thou uſeſt to do unto thoſe that love thy name. I hope to find a wonderous alteration, and cannot think it ſtrange, if I feel my benumbed heart all ſublimated,

when

when I come to that fire, which ever burns without conſuming; or, if I find an entire ſeparation of all my worldly and groſs affections, when heated thoroughly with that love, whoſe excellence it is to purify the heart by activity, and to enlighten blind underſtandings by the brightneſs of its flame.

An Act of Praiſe.

LOOK down, O Lord, with favour and good acceptance upon thy poor unworthy, but ſincere ſervant, now proſtrating himſelf before thine altar, with a moſt devout zeal, and all the paſſionate and tender reſentment of which my heart is capable; wiſhing ſtill, that theſe good affections were greater and more worthy of thee, and that I might meet and embrace my Lord, with all that perfection of holineſs and eager joy, by which thy beſt and deareſt ſaints recommended their prayers and praiſes, and ſo eminetly ſignalized themſelves, in the celebration of this bleſſed ſacrament. O God! my love and life, my only and eternal bliſs, were but my power proportioned to my will, none of thoſe excellent patterns even expreſſed more awful reverence, more ardent devotions, more eager love, more humble gratitude, than I at this time am diſpoſed, and moſt earneſtly wiſh, to expreſs.

I know, O Lord, how far I am from being worthy to receive at thy hand ſuch plentiful effuſions of grace, ſuch diſtinguiſhing marks of thy kindneſs, as enabled them to be ſo pious and exemplary in all their addreſſes to thee. But yet my heart, and all its affections, ſuch as they are,

I dedicate to thy ſervice. The utmoſt a devout mind can conceive or deſire, I offer in thy preſence, with all poſſible reſpect, with ſincerity as unfeigned, as if my zeal were much more bright and fierce. I do it without the leaſt reſerve: all I have, and am, is entirely thine, moſt freely conſecrated to thy uſe, my God, and Lord, my almighty creator, and moſt merciful redeemer. Take then a full poſſeſſion of one, upon ſo many accounts thy own. Enter, and dwell, and reign in me, abſolute, and for ever. Behold, I open my arms wide, to embrace my Lord and ſpouſe. I deſire at this time to receive thee into my heart, with the ſame reverence and humility, the ſame reſpectful gratitude and love, the ſame faith, and hope, and chaſte deſire, with which thy holy mother received thee into her virgin womb, when ſhe returned that pious anſwer to the angel, who brought the glad tidings of thy myſterious incarnation, "behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it unto me according to thy word."

May all the zeal and raptures, the exſtaſies, and heavenly viſions of the ſaints; may all their virtues and their praiſes; may every creature in heaven and earth; may all that I have ever prayed for, and all that pray for me, contribute to thy glory; and may thy name be only and ever magnified by all and each of them.

Accept, O Lord, my hearty wiſhes and deſires of praiſe and thankſgiving, as infinite as thy majeſty; for they are thine of right, and mayeſt thou be worthily bleſſed by them. This

is, and ſhall be, my daily, hourly prayer. Nor will I content myſelf with wiſhing and endeavouring this, ſingly and in my own perſon, but do moſt ſeriouſly invite and conjure all the bleſſed ſpirits above, all thy faithful people upon earth, to join in this moſt juſt tribute of honour; and, in full concert and perfect harmony, to publiſh thy praiſe and glory, in all times and places, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

A Prayer before receiving the Bread and Wine.

MOST gracious God, who of thy infinite mercy haſt given thy ſon Jeſus Chriſt to be our great high-prieſt, and the biſhop of our ſouls, who did offer up himſelf to thee a pure and immaculate ſacrifice upon the croſs for us miſerable ſinners, who has given us his fleſh to eat, and his blood to drink, in a myſtical manner; and haſt aſſured us by thy holy ſpirit, that as often as we eat that bread, and drink that cup, we ſhew forth the Lord's death till his coming again.

I humbly beſeech thee therefore by the merits of his blood, the great price of our redemption.

I intreat thee by his wonderful and ineffable charity, wherewith he has vouchſafed to love us unworthy creatures, at ſo grate a rate, that thou would'ſt be pleaſed to waſh me in his blood from all my ſins, which make me unworthy to partake of theſe holy myſteries.

Let my repentance be hearty and ſincere, and expreſs itſelf in all the circumſtances of holy obedience for the time to come.

Thou

Thou alone out of an unclean thing canſt bring a clean; of a wretched ſinner make me therefore holy and righteous.

Thou art the fountain of mercy, ſhut not up thy bowels of compaſſion towards me.

Thou art the great phyſician of ſouls, diſplay thy power in my health and recovery.

Let me approach thy holy table with reverence and devotion, that no vile affections may hinder me from receiving the benefits of this divine nouriſhment.

Let me celebrate this chriſtian ſacrifice with purity of heart, and a right intention of mind, that I may obtain all theſe advantages for which thou wert graciouſly pleaſed to eſtabliſh it.

Let me entirely reſign my ſoul and body to be a reaſonable, holy, and lively ſacrifice unto thee; for thou haſt the juſteſt claim to me, ſince the bleſſed Jeſus has purchaſed me at the price of his own blood.

Grant, O Lord, that I may conſtantly endeavour to make ſome proficiency in all the virtues of chriſtian life; becauſe Jeſus has obtained for me, by the merits of his ſufferings, the grace and aſſiſtance of thy holy ſpirit, to work in me both to will and to do thy good pleaſure.

Make me ready to be reconciled to all thoſe that have offended me, becauſe when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his ſon.

Let me embrace all my poor brethren with ſincere love and charity, and contribute all I can to the relief of Chriſt's diſtreſſed members,

becauſe he thought not his life too dear, nor his blood too precious to redeem me from a ſtate of bondage and ſlavery.

Strengthen me, O Lord, in ſuch a manner by this ſpiritual food, that I may ſucceſsfully encounter all the attacks of my ſpiritual enemies.

Suppreſs in me the ſpirit of pride and vainglory, of envy and detraction, of uncleanneſs and intemperance, or of any diſtruſt and diffidence of thy mercy.

May all temptations to theſe offences againſt thy holy laws be overcome by that power which thou ſhalt be pleaſed to communicate to me in this holy ſacrament.

And may all thoſe evils which the craft and ſubtilty of the devil, or man worketh againſt me, be brought to nought.

That, being outwardly and inwardly fortified by the aſſiſtance of thy grace, I may preſs towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Chriſt Jeſus; when I ſhall enjoy thee no longer in myſtery, which is our lot and portion here below; but ſee thee face to face, and be eternally ſatisfied with the pleaſures of thy kingdom, in and through the merits of Jeſus Chriſt our only mediator and advocate. *Amen.*

When the Prieſt approaches to deliver the conſecrated Bread.

COME, O Lord! and make no long tarrying, O my God!

I am not worthy thou ſhouldeſt enter under my

my roof; but, Lord, be merciful to me a ſinner.

I long for thy ſalvation, O! ſatisfy me with thy likeneſs.

I open my heart to thee, O! come unto me, and abide with me, and powerfully ſupport me in all trials and temptations, when I moſt need thy help. *Amen.*

A Prayer after receiving the conſecrated bread.

BLeſſed be thy holy name, O Lord Jeſus, for this thy ineſtimable gift, for this comfort thou haſt left me in this vale of tears.

As long as I live will I praiſe thee; as long as I have any being, I will moſt thankfully acknowledge this thy bounty and goodneſs to the children of men.

Thou haſt given me thy precious body to be the food of my ſoul; behold I offer to thee my body and ſoul, make them fit for thy ſervices.

Let this divine food repair in me whatever has been decayed by the luſts of the fleſh, or the wiles of ſatan.

That my underſtanding may be exerciſed in the knowledge of thee, and the contemplation of thy divine truths, which are alone able to make me wiſe unto ſalvation;

That my will may chuſe and deſire thee above all things, who art the chiefeſt good, the moſt deſireable portion of immortal ſouls;

That my affections may be entirely fixed on thee, who art alone amiable, and the centre of eternal ſatisfaction.

I will love thee, O Lord, becauſe thou art

infinitely good, and thy mercy endureth for ever.

I will love thee, O Lord, becauſe thou didſt create me after thy own image, capable of loving thee, and enjoying thee eternally.

I will love thee, O Lord, becauſe when I had loſt and undone myſelf, thou didſt die to redeem me.

I will love thee, O Lord, becauſe thou art only worthy of my love, thou only canſt fill and ſatisfy my ſoul.

Be thou therefore my hope and confidence, and let all my truſt be placed in thee.

Be thou my riches and delight, and let all my joy and contentment reſt in thee.

Be thou my peace and refuge, and let my pleaſure and ſafety depend on thee.

Be thou my portion and greateſt treaſure, and let my eternal happineſs be fixed in the enjoyment of thee. *Amen*, Lord Jeſus, *Amen*.

When the Prieſt approaches to deliver the Cup.

I Will receive the cup of ſalvation, and call upon the name of the Lord.

I will ratify my vows with this blood of the new covenant, and engage myſelf, O God, to be eternally thine.

Satisfy my thirſty ſoul with good things, and let this communion of the blood of Chriſt put more gladneſs into my heart, than wine and oil when they increaſe. *Amen*.

A Prayer after receiving the Cup.

BLeſſing and honour, glory and power be unto him that ſitteth on the throne, and unto the lamb that was ſlain, for ever and ever.

I give thee moſt humble and hearty thanks, O Lord, from the bottom of my ſoul, that thou haſt been pleaſed to admit me, at this time, to the participation of theſe holy and deſireable myſteries;

That thou haſt vouchſafed to feed me a ſinner, thy unworthy ſervant, with the ſpiritual nouriſhment of the body and blood of thy ſon Jeſus Chriſt; and this not for any merits of my own, but for the ſake of thy infinite goodneſs and mercy.

Unworthy though I am, yet thy bounty, O Lord, never fails; the love of my ſaviour is not diminiſhed, and the virtue of his propitiation is never exhauſted.

Grant therefore, I beſeech thee, that this holy ſacrament may never turn to my judgment and condemnation;

But that it may be health and recovery under all my weakneſſes and infirmities;

Safety and defence againſt all the attacks of my ſpiritual enemies;

Vigour and ſtrength to all my holy purpoſes and reſolutions;

Comfort and ſupport under all the afflictions and calamities of life;

Aſſiſtance and direction under all difficulties and doubts.

Courage and conſtancy under all dangers and perſecutions, eſpecially in times of ſickneſs, and at the hour of death.

Finally, let it procure for me pardon and forgiveneſs in this life, mercy and favour at the day of judgment, and a never fading crown of glory in the heavenly kingdom, where, with thy ſon Jeſus Chriſt, and the bleſſed ſpirit, thou liveſt and reigneſt, one, God, world without end. *Amen.*

We cannot better conclude our devotions, if time and opportunity will permit, than by offering up our praiſes and thankſgivings, for all thoſe mercies and bleſſings God hath beſtowed upon us all along in life, particularly for his ineſtimable love in the redemption of the world, by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; and what heart that is warm with a true ſenſe of what his ſaviour has done and ſuffered for him, can refuſe the humble tribute of a moſt grateful acknowledgment.

A Thankſgiving for God's Mercies, Temporal and Spiritual.

PRaiſe the Lord, O my ſoul, and all that is within me praiſe his holy name. Praiſe the Lord, O my ſoul, and forget not all his benefits.

Thou, O Lord, art alone infinite in all excellencies and perfections, and therefore thou only art the eternal object of the adorations and praiſes of all thy creatures.

I de-

I deſire to praiſe and worſhip thee with all the heavenly hoſt, ſaying, holy, holy, holy, Lord God of heaven and earth, thou haſt created all things, and for thy pleaſure they are and were created.

All praiſe and thankſgiving be rendered unto thee, for making me after thine own image and likeneſs, capable of loving thee, and enjoying thee eternally.

I bleſs thee for the light of my reaſon, and all other endowments and faculties of my ſoul and body.

I bleſs thee for preſerving me from innumerable accidents and dangers, through the whole courſe of my life; for all my known and unobſerved deliverances, and for the guard thy holy angels have kept over me.

I bleſs thee for the advantages of a pious education, and for ſeaſoning my tender mind with early notion of virtue and religion;

I bleſs thee for recovering me to a ſenſe of my duty, when I fooliſhly ſtrayed from the fountain of all happineſs; and for thy unwearied patience towards me, after ſo many and ſuch great provocations.

I bleſs thee for all the comforts and accommodations of life, which thou haſt beſtowed upon me, whereby my pilgrimage in this world has been ſoftened and ſupported:

And I adore thy wiſe providence in all thoſe afflictions and diſappointments with which thou haſt thought fit to exerciſe me, and which have brought me to that ſenſe of thee and of myſelf,

ſelf, which it is likely nothing elſe would have done.

By thee I have been held up from the womb, my praiſe ſhall continually be of thee.

Above all, I praiſe and magnify thy holy name, for thy inexpreſſible love to loſt man;

For ſending thy ſon into the world, to redeem us from a ſtate of ſin and miſery, by ſuffering for us, and dying in our ſtead, that we might be partakers of the divine nature, and receive the promiſes of eternal life;

And for his inſtituting and ordaining holy myſteries as pledges of his love, and for a continual remembrance of his death to our great and endleſs comfort.

As long as I live will I praiſe thee, for theſe wonders thou haſt done for the children of men, as long as I have any being I will ſhew forth thy noble acts.

I bleſs thee for the advantages of thy divine revelations, that thou haſt not abandon'd me to the dim light of my own reaſon; but haſt given me thy holy ſcriptures to inſtruct me in what is neceſſary for me to believe and practiſe, in order to my eternal ſalvation.

I praiſe thee for delivering me from temptations too ſtrong for me, and for ſupporting me under many;

For the aſſiſtance, and direction, and comforts of thy holy ſpirit; for thy preventing and reſtraining grace;

For ſubduing my underſtanding and affections to the obedience of faith and godlineſs.

For

For inſpiring me with good thoughts, and kindling pious deſires in my ſoul, and for aſſiſting me in all thy methods of procuring eternal happineſs;

For theſe and all other thy mercies and favours, which are more than can be numbered; bleſſing and honour, thankſgiving and praiſe, be given unto thee, O moſt adorable deity, father, ſon, and holy ghoſt; by me and by all angels, by all men and by all creatures, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

A ſhort Prayer when the Communion Service is ended.

PArdon, O God, all theſe imperfections that have accompanied me at this time in my attendance at thy altar; forgive the deadneſs and dulneſs of my affections, the wanderings of my thoughts, and the diſtractions of mind.

Let the ſincerity of my holy purpoſes and reſolutions make ſome amends for my weakneſs and frailty.

O! let this commemoration of my crucified ſaviour influence all my thoughts, words and actions, that my converſation may be as becometh the goſpel of Chriſt.

Reward me not according to my deſerts, but according to my great neceſſities, and thy own rich mercy in Jeſus Chriſt; to whom with thee, O God the father, and God the holy ghoſt, be all honour and glory, world without end. *Amen.*

A Prayer in our Retirement after we are returned home from the Lord's Table, which may be added to our Evening Devotions.

I Acknowledge, O Lord, my God! with all thankfulneſs of heart, thy great mercy and goodneſs communicated to me this day, in giving me an opportunity of approaching thy holy table, and in diſpoſing my mind to commemorate the infinite love of my crucified ſaviour, to render him thanks and praiſe for laying down his life as a ſacrifice for the ſins of the world; and to repreſent unto thee that ſacrifice, as a full ſatisfaction for them whereby thou doſt incline me humbly to hope for all the Benefits of his death and paſſion.

How many, O Lord, turn a deaf ear to all the preſſing exhortations of thy miniſters, and being influenced by the care, and riches, and pleaſures of life, when they are invited, refuſe to come? How many pious and devout ſouls are deprived of the bleſſed advantage of this higheſt and moſt ſolemn act of religion? And how many ſincere and faithful chriſtians are oppreſſed with ſcruples, dejected with fears, ſo that they dare not venture to partake of the holy myſteries?

What thanks therefore, moſt gracious God, can I return unto thy divine majeſty, for impreſſing a ſenſe of my duty upon my mind, and for that ſtrength and power whereby thou haſt in ſome meaſure enabled me to perform it? I will praiſe and magnify thy great and glorious name,

name, and I will entirely devote myſelf to thy ſervice as long as I have any being.

Bleſſed be thy name for thoſe freſh ſupplies of grace I have received at thy altar, grant that they may make me run the way of thy commandments with delight and pleaſure; that I may never any more faint or droop in my duty.

Bleſſed be thy name for thoſe comfortable aſſurances thou haſt given me of pardon and forgiveneſs. Let this thy compaſſionate goodneſs be a perpetual obligation to love and gratitude. Let it put me upon my guard, that I may watch over all my ways, and do always that which is well pleaſing in thy ſight.

Bleſſed be thy name for that peace and quiet thou haſt reſtored to my ſoul; for thoſe reſolutions thou haſt wrought in me to perſevere in thy ſervice to the end of my days; make them firm, vigorous, and conſtant, and never let any ſinful paſſions any more ruffle and diſcompoſe my mind.

Bleſſed be thy name for that reliſh thou haſt given me of ſpiritual delights; that deſire of poſſeſſing the eternal inheritance; let the enjoyments of ſenſe appear mean and contemptible, and let not the pleaſures of the world any more prevail upon me to tranſgreſs thy holy laws.

Grant, O Lord, that I may walk worthy of theſe thy diſtinguiſhing mercies, and live as becomes the redeemed of the Lord. Without thee, O bleſſed Jeſus, I can do nothing; without thee who art the ſon of righteouſneſs, I ſhall walk in darkneſs; without thee who art the

the phyſician of ſouls, I ſhall languiſh and die; without thee who art the joy of all devout minds, I ſhall conſume my days away in ſadneſs. Remain therefore, O Lord, and abide with me for ever; I ſhall then be enabled to do thy will in this life, and thereby be qualified to partake of thy glories to all eternity in the next. *Amen, Amen.*

The END *of* PART III.

28 SE 60

MEDITATIONS AND PRAYERS FOR SICK PERSONS.

MEDITATION I.

Upon Sickneſs in general, the Author, Cauſes, and Ends of it.

COME, my ſoul, and let us reaſon together, concerning the things that have befallen us. This body, to which thou art united, flags and droops; the vigour of it is abated, its beauty withered and waſted; the well knit limbs are grown feeble, and with great difficulty ſuſtain their weight, or obey thy commands. They ſcarce perform any offices aright; and when they do, it is with pantings and tremblings, with wearineſs and faintneſs. They ſeem to groan and ſink under their burthen; and each member, which was formerly wont to ſerve thee, with wonderful chearfulneſs and activity, now calls for ſuccours from

abroad, and is no longer able to ſupport itſelf. This is ſuch a change as ought not to be felt only, but well conſidered too. "Be not thou therefore like to the horſes and the mule, which have no underſtanding," but loſe all impreſſions as ſoon as the ſenſe of the ſtroke ceaſes. It is thy privilege and duty both, to reflect and ruminate, to call back things already paſt, and anticipate thoſe which are to come; and as for ſuch as are actually preſent, to acquaint thyſelf with the cauſes and reaſons, the ends and uſes of them, as well as with the nature and quality of the things themſelves. All theſe are operations proper to a reaſoning ſoul, and the preſent occaſion calls upon thee for the exerciſe of them all. For thou canſt not be ſick, as becomes a man, and a chriſtian, without enquiring, whence and wherefore it is, that thou art ſo. The firſt and moſt neceſſary ſtep, both toward the patient enduring of the anguiſh, and the ſucceſsful application of the remedies, is to learn the true original of our diſeaſe.

Know therefore moſt aſſuredly, that what the holy ghoſt hath ſpoken concerning affliction in general, is in an eſpecial manner true concerning this particular branch of it; "It cometh not forth out of the duſt, neither doth trouble ſpring out of the ground." Ourſelves indeed were taken thence and moulded into man. But this was not the effect of any natural cauſe: the God of nature, by his almighty power, commanded earth and aſhes, into this beauteous and wonderful ſtructure of the human body. And he alone who created and formed

formed it, commands it back into its native duſt again. Every diſeaſe and decay, whether it be the effect or accident of time, whether what we uſually call violent and ſhortening our days, or whether according to the courſe of nature, and the ſlower declinings of age; all are but ſo many ſhocks, by which this fleſhly tabernacle is ſhaken, or moulders by degrees, and, by growing more ruinous and uninhabitable, gives the ſoul warning to ſeek another dwelling. And theſe are all diſpoſed, by a moſt ſteady and particular providence; and, if traced up to their firſt original, have a cauſe as ſublime as the body itſelf hath. Nature indeed goes on in a ſmooth and ſettled courſe; and ſo the hand that guides this engine is far diſtant, and ſeldom obſerved; but even nature itſelf is God's inſtrument, though the proceſs and long chain of cauſes be ſo intricate, and withal ſo familiar, and frequently alike, that the events reſulting from thence ceaſe to be marvelous in our eyes. A cold, or a ſurfeit, a weak conſtitution, or foul blood; unwholeſome diet, and ill hours; neglect of means, careleſſneſs of our health; advice taken too late, or a medicine improper, or out of ſeaſon: theſe are what we commonly charge our indiſpoſitions and our miſcarriages upon. And thus far we may ſay true; but if we go no higher, we ſtop a good deal too ſoon: for it is eaſy to diſcern a hand above, that directs and limits all theſe; that ſmites the ſtrong and preſerves the tender; ſlays by the ſlighteſt accidents, and recovers from the moſt deſperate; and this in a manner moſt ſurpriſing,

ſuch as no human art or ſkill had any expectation, or can give any account of.

If then thou haſt convinced thyſelf, that the finger of God is in all theſe things; purſue this thought (my ſoul) a little further; and ſee what a fair and wide ſcene of knowledge, and heavenly wiſdom it will ſoon open to thee. For what is God? Is he not that very being infinitely powerful, and wiſe, and juſt, and good? Is it not he who made thee, and ſuſtains thee, the ſame who governs and diſpoſes this whole world, and all the creatures in it, after the counſel of his own will? He with whom the lives of his ſervants are exceeding precious? in whoſe ſight the hairs of our head are all numbered? Without whoſe permiſſion not a ſparrow can fall to the ground, and in whoſe eſtimation the meaneſt of thoſe, that are made after his own image, are of infinitely more value than any ſparrows? Remember that ſuch is the author of thy diſeaſes: and this ſingle remembrance will lead thee to ſuch conſequences, ſuch holy and ſeaſonable reflections, as cannot, if duly attended, and carefully improved, but work in thee that frame of mind, which beſt ſuits thy preſent circumſtances, and muſt needs diſpoſe thee to reap large and laſting advantages from them. For how can'ſt thou conſider his power, and not dread the dire effects of an angry, or reſt ſecure under the favour and protection of a reconciled God? Or how his wiſdom, and not be contented with his chuſings for thee? Or how his juſtice, and not be more zealouſly

zealouſly concerned, to ſeek a pardon for thoſe ſins, which have provoked, and made thee an object of it? Or how his goodneſs, and not be even thankful under thy ſufferings? For what is grievous to fleſh and blood, is yet ordained to excellent and heavenly purpoſes, and it is out of very kindneſs that thou art thus afflicted: how can'ſt thou think upon his right of creation, without acknowledgment of his bounty, in giving and continuing thy being, and all the comforts of it? Or how, laſtly, upon his preference of mankind above the reſt of the creatures here below, without obſerving the peculiar prerogative which renders men more valuable, that of a noble and reaſonable ſoul, which the others want; and ſo cheriſhing the hope of immortality, whereunto man only, of all here below, is appointed? A hope which aſſures us, we ſhall not periſh, but only be changed; and, in the midſt of languiſhings and departing ſtruggles, can bear up under, nay, can triumph over agonies and death itſelf. Here then will I fix my thoughts, I will come before the almighty with a ſong, and make my prayer unto the God of my life.

An HYMN.

GOD is the Lord, even God alone; he killeth, and he maketh alive, he woundeth, and he healeth.

Thou Lord haſt power over life, and death; thou ſcourgeſt, and ſheweſt mercy; thou leadeſt

to

to the gates of the grave, and bringeſt up again.

It is he that holdeth our ſoul in life, and ſuffereth not our feet to ſlip.

And again, when we are diminiſhed and brought low, through ſickneſs, through any affliction or ſorrow.

Though he ſuffer us to be evil entreated, yet helpeth he the meek out of miſery, or maketh all his bed in his ſickneſs.

For it is neither herb, nor mollifying plaiſter, that reſtoreth men to health, but thy word, O Lord, which healeth all things.

My time is always in thy hand, unto God the Lord belong the iſſues of life and death.

All creatures wait upon thee; when thou openeſt thy hand they are filled with good.

When thou ſendeſt forth thy ſpirit they are created; when thou hideſt thy face, they are troubled; when thou takeſt away their breath they die, and are turned again to their duſt.

I will ſing to the Lord as long as I live, I will praiſe my God while I have my being.

My meditation on him ſhall be ſweet; and my joy ſhall be in the Lord.

When thou ſaideſt, ſeek ye my face; my my heart ſaid unto me, thy face, Lord, will I ſeek.

O hide not thou thy face from me; nor caſt away thy ſervant in diſpleaſure.

Thou haſt been my helper: leave me not, neither forſake me, O God of my ſalvation.

Some

Some put their truſt in ſtrength of nature, and ſome in medicines, but I will remember the name of the Lord our God.

O put not your truſt, (in phyſicians nor) in any child of man, for there is no help in them.

But bleſſed is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, and whoſe hope is in the Lord his God.

Save, Lord and hear me, O king of heaven, when I call upon thee.

Glory be to the father, and to the ſon, *&c.*

As it was in the beginning, *&c.*

PRAYER.

O Almighty God, the father of the ſpirits of all fleſh, whoſe never-failing providence ordereth all things both in heaven and earth; I deſire with the profoundeſt humility and reverence to proſtrate both ſoul and body before thee, begging that thou wouldſt give me grace, to behold and admire thy doings, in all thy diſpenſations towards myſelf and all mankind. I acknowledge it thy bounty, that ever I was at all; and adore thy mercy and long ſuffering, for preſerving me thus long in the land of the living. My many days and years of health and comfort were thy gift; and the recoveries from former ſickneſſes, as well as the prevention of thoſe dangers and diſeaſes I never felt, are owing to thee alone. Man doth not live by bread and care, nor is relieved by medicines only, but by the word and bleſſing which proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Grant me I beſeech thee, a ſtrong and due ſenſe

of

of my entire dependance upon thee, and grace to improve under, and behave myſelf in conformity to that perſuaſion. That whether the means uſed for my eaſe and relief ſucceed, I may aſcribe all the glory and thanks to thee alone: or whether thou thinkeſt fit to deny them their intended effects. I may humble myſelf under thy mighty hand, and remember that thou Lord, haſt done it. Inſpire me, I beſeech thee, with that true and heavenly wiſdom, which may help me to diſcern aright the reaſons, and enable me to anſwer the ends of this correction, and all other thy dealings with me, that I may bear the rod, and him who hath appointed it; and, in all conditions, ſubmit myſelf entirely to thy good pleaſure, and glorify God in the day of viſitation. So ſhall this weakneſs of my body tend to the ſtrengthening of my virtues and health of my ſoul; through the merits of him, who redeemed them both at the price of his own blood; even thy ſon and my ever bleſſed ſaviour Jeſus Chriſt our Lord. *Amen.*

MEDITATION II.

Of the Power of God, and the Affections ariſing from thence, namely, the Dread of his Anger and truſt in his Protection.

WHICH way ſoever we turn our eyes, ten thouſand objects meet us, which all prove and preach to us the almighty power of God. The glorious fabrick of the univerſe, and every thing contained therein, nay even the meaneſt,

meaneſt, and, in human eſteem, moſt deſpicable creature, proclaims aloud the omnipotence of his maker. And the good order in which theſe are contained, does as much magnify his preſerving, as their exiſtence does his creating power. But man needs not look abroad; himſelf is ten thouſand arguments to demonſtrate this to himſelf. The curious ſtructure of his body, the excellencies of its divine inhabitant, the ſoul, and the marvellous amazing union and mutual correſpondence of both theſe, could be the workmanſhip of nothing leſs than omnipotence. This mixture of ſpirit and matter, of periſhing and immortal; the ſagacity of the one to influence and govern, the readineſs of the other to obey, and to be actuated; the ſprightlineſs and vigour, or elſe the heavineſs and diſorder, and reciprocal diſabilities, which each of theſe convey to the other, are moſt certainly the Lord's doing, and ought to be marvellous in our eyes. Alas! how ſhould man ſubſiſt one moment, even in the ſtate of his greateſt perfection, did not this great artificer watch over his own work, and conſtantly ſuſtain it; did not he check and moderate that conflict, which the warring elements of our body are continually engaging in; but eſpecially, now that the corruption of our nature, and the tranſgreſſion of our firſt parents, hath let death and diſeaſes looſe upon us; there needs no freſh infliction. For if God be but paſſive, and withdraw his reſtraint, the enemy is always ready to devour us, and we carry the ſeeds of our torment and ruin

about our own perſons. And God hath ſo decreed that every man ſhall once fall by the ſtroke of death. A decree, which in our greateſt ſtrength, in the very bloom and beauty of youth, contrary to our own expectations, or the fears of our tendereſt friends he ſometimes executes: to teach us that our being is wholly precarious, that we have nothing ſtable here, no title even to life itſelf; but are all concluded by a ſentence already paſs'd. For all our days are in the nature of a reprieve; the prolonging whereof is an act of mere mercy, as the cutting it ſhort is free from the leaſt ſhadow of injuſtice. God then cannot want means and opportunities for this. All nature is his; the malice of wicked men, the ſpight of our foes, the miſtaken kindneſs of our friends, the errors of our phyſicians, and the miſapplication of their medicines, are all directed and over-ruled to this end. The humours of our bodies, the temper of the air, and every element indeed, when he gives the word, turn executioners; or in truth, if he pleaſe to permit, the thing will do it ſelf. He burns up by fevers, or drowns us in dropſies; ſtrikes us dead in a moment by apoplexies, buries us alive by palſies, or waſtes us, by ſlow and imperceptible degrees, with lingering conſumptions. Thou ſeeſt my ſoul, how eaſily God can do theſe things, by a thouſand inſtances of friends and acquaintance gone before thee, and by thy own yet more ſenſible experience, in this worn and languiſhing body of thine. Thou feeleſt now that no fleſh is able to ſtand before God, and how quickly we are

are blasted by the breath of his displeasure. That to him alone belong power and strength, and to poor mortal man nothing but wretchedness, and weakness, and vanity.

Surely, my soul, had these impressions been fresh and deep upon me heretofore, they would have check'd my wild career in sin, and prevented many grievous and bold transgressions, which I have reason to fear might provoke the divine majesty, to cast me on this bed of languishing. For do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than he? Alas! my own condition has taught me how vain and fool hardy it is, not only to fight against God, but not to fear and stand in perpetual awe of him: how fatal to play with this consuming fire! And I cannot but wish from the bottom of my soul, that I had better consider this point long ago. For he is a terrible and mighty God; and when he enters into controversy with mankind, no flesh can abide it. At least, my soul, let us make that good use of this reflection now, to be unfeignedly sorry for what is past, and more cautious for the time to come. The flower is withered indeed, and hangs its feeble head: but it is not yet quite cut down. O let us yet humble ourselves in this fear, and consider, what a yet more dreadful vengeance God hath in store, for hardened and unpersuadable wretches. If the decays and pains of the body alone are so grievous, how shall we bear the loss of body and soul both? how shall we dwell with everlasting burnings? If the rod of God, these comparatively light punishments, represent to us the terrors of his angry justice;

who can bear the approach of that diſmal day, when he ſhall come in thunder and flames, to make an abſolute end of this whole world, and deliver wicked ſinners over to irrecoverable deſtruction? An eternity of torments! Jeſus defend us! who can entertain the moſt diſtant thought of it, without trembling and aſtoniſhment? Fall down then my ſoul, and humble thyſelf under the mighty hand of God; that thou mayeſt not periſh with this frail body. Loſe no time in making thy peace, but work with all thy might; eſpecially now, that the day of life ſeems to decline, and the night comes on, wherein no man can work.

For remember, my ſoul, for thy encouragement, that if thou abound in the work of the Lord, thy labour ſhall not be in vain in the Lord. He is no leſs mighty to ſave than to deſtroy: with him no word is impoſſible; and, if he will, he can yet raiſe this feeble body, and reſtore it to perfect health and ſoundneſs. Nay he will certainly do it, if that be beſt for me; and if it be not, he will do yet more. For there will come a day, in which this vile earthly part ſhall be enlivened again; and if it crumble into duſt, and ſcatter in the mean while; though it paſs through infinite different forms, yet will God purſue this body through all its changes, collect its diſperſed particles, command the little heaps of duſt to awake, and tranſlate it into a glorious and ſpiritual body; a body fit for a ſtate of incorruption, and the inheritance of that kingdom, where this fleſh and blood, which we now ſet ſo falſe, ſo extravagant a value

a value upon, is not worthy to enter. I will therefore conform myſelf in the power and promiſes of my God; and with holy Job, "though he ſlay me yet will I truſt in him." For even then will I lay me down in hope of a reſurrection to eternal life, and commit my body like ſeed to the ground; not to be loſt, but improved by corrupting there. For thou, O God, art unchangeable, and thy promiſes without repentance; and promiſed thou haſt, that our vile body ſhall be faſhioned like unto Chriſt's glorious body, according to the mighty working whereby thou art able to ſubdue all things to thyſelf.

EJACULATIONS.

IN thee therefore, O Lord, will I put my truſt: let me never be put to confuſion, but deliver me in thy righteouſneſs and ſave me.

Be thou my ſtrong hold whereunto I may always reſort: thou haſt promiſed to help me, for thou art my houſe of defence, and my caſtle.

Deliver me O my God from the adverſary's hands: preſerve me from the hunter of ſouls;

He layeth ſnares and is mighty to deſtroy: but yet the Lord who dwelleth on high, is mightier.

Thou, O Lord God, art the thing that I long for: thou haſt been my hope even from my youth.

Through thee have I been holden up ever ſince I was born; thou art he that took me out of

my mother's womb; my praiſe ſhall be always of thee.

O caſt me not away in the time of my diſtreſs; forſake me not when my ſtrength faileth me.

Let them be confounded and periſh, that are againſt my ſoul: let the wicked ſpirits be covered with ſhame and diſhonour that ſeek to do me evil.

As for me I will patiently tarry the Lord's leiſure, and will put my truſt in the Lord.

For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he ſhall ſtand at the laſt day upon the earth.

And though after my ſkin worms deſtroy this body; yet in my fleſh ſhall I ſee God.

Whom I ſhall ſee for myſelf, and mine eyes ſhall behold and not another.

For he is the reſurrection and the life, and whoſoever believeth in him, though he die, yet ſhall he live again.

Glory be to the Father, &c.

As it was in the beginning, &c.

PRAYER.

O Moſt gracious Lord God, terrible in thy judgments, and wonderful in all thy dealings towards the children of men; poſſeſs my ſoul, I beſeech thee, with aweful and becoming apprehenſions of thy majeſty. Give me a ſerious ſenſe and ſorrow for ever having hardened my heart from thy fear, and provoked that vengeance, which can conſume me in a moment. Lord, convince me whom I ought to dread;

dread; and let me never, for the gratifying any ſinful inclination, forget any more the Lord my maker, and incur the diſpleaſure of him, who is able to caſt both body and ſoul into hell. And as I implore thy grace, that this conſideration of thy power may be an effectual check to all my unruly appetites; ſo I beſeech thee, let it be my ſtay and confidence in all dangers and diſtreſſes. That forſaking the broken reeds of all worldly ſuccours, I may put my whole truſt in thy mercy; and evermore ſerving thee in holineſs and pureneſs of living, may even in death itſelf be more than conqueror. Even in that joyful day, when all enemies ſhall be deſtroyed; when thy children ſhall come forth from the dark priſon of the grave, and ſhine like ſuns in the kingdom of thee their father. Grant this thou rock of my ſoul, for thy dear ſon Jeſus Chriſt's ſake.

Amen.

MEDITATION III.

Of the Juſtice of God: and the penitential Sorrow reſulting from it.

GOD is a being infinitely perfect and good; the ſupreme, the original good; the author and maker of all things; and cannot therefore be ſuppoſed, either to hate what himſelf hath made, or to have given being to any thing, with a deſign to render it miſerable. His providence and power, (which made the ſubject of the two former meditations) are, in their own nature and primitive intention, calculated

for the benefit and ſecurity of his creatures. And if at any time they become the inſtruments or diſpenſers of grief and pain, this is an effect purely accidental; an operation ſo foreign, that it is even extorted from them, and wholly imputable to ſome other cauſe: and this is the caſe of mankind; once favoured above all their fellow-creatures, and ſafe under the ſhelter and ſmiles of an almighty projector: but, by their own fault, deprived of this defence; left naked and expoſed to miſchiefs and ſufferings; and not only diſarmed of their ſureſt guard, but in perpetual danger of being deſtroyed by that very hand, which was formerly their friend and defender. O wretched conſequences of ſin! that did not only render our firſt parents and all their poſterity liable to bodily death, and all the diſeaſes and pains that lead to it; but left a fatal averſeneſs to all good, and a ſtrong propenſity in us to all evil. By indulging hereof we add our own actual guilt to that which our ſinful parents derived down to us; and by iniquities without number, by wilful, repeated, habitual, and bold tranſgreſſions, do confirm and aggravate this ſentence of death, and the juſtice of God againſt ourſelves.

Wonder not then, if thou ſee ſo many dreadful ſpectacles of affliction in the world; nor murmur, when thou thyſelf, art bound in the ſame fetters, and ſore laden with the burthen of adverſity. But remember that God is righteous, and thou and theſe people are wicked; that he is wholly and juſt as well as good; and,

and, though he do not willingly grieve the children of men, yet their iniquities put a ſort of violence upon him, which he cannot reſiſt. They quite weary him out, and render it impoſſible (that is, inconſiſtent with his other attributes and the perfection of his nature) to let ſuch men go always unpuniſhed. Nay even in thoſe infinitely more dreadful torments of another world, his perfections are concerned to vindicate themſelves; for, though theſe be terrible, above what we are able to expreſs or conceive, yet they are juſt. And, at the ſame time that we may be apt to queſtion, whether ſo great ſeverity be conſiſtent with the character of our judge, we prove the wiſdom of our law-giver; and, that even eternal pains were neceſſary, ſince even all this will not contain us in our duty, and effectually reſtrain us from ſinning.

And this, my ſoul, is thy caſe, theſe everlaſting plagues are the deſerved wages of thy wickedneſs. For do but deſcend into thyſelf (as it becomes thee to do, now more eſpecially) and there take an exact ſurvey of thy miſeries and frailties; thy raging paſſions, and ungoverned appetites: aſk thyſelf what abuſes and miſemployments of health thou haſt been guilty of. Whether thou haſt not neglected God and heaven too much, and been too full of care and fondneſs for this preſent world; whether thou haſt not omitted his worſhip and ſacraments, and diſregarded his word; or whether theſe have not been frequented formally and coldly. Examine the heavineſs of thy affec-

tions, the wanderings and negligence of thy mind, in any publick or private devotions (*here it may be convenient to inſtance in any other particular againſt our duty to God*) See again the violation of juſtice and charity to thy neighbour, whether thou haſt faithfully diſcharged the offices of the ſeveral capacities and relations God hath placed thee in. [*A huſband or wife, a maſter or miſtreſs, a ſon or daughter; a magiſtrate, a ſubject, a parent, a brother or ſiſter, and the like.*] If thou haſt not been guilty of groſs and palpable injuſtice in thy dealings, yet haſt thou done wrong to no man's ſoul, by ill advice, or ill example? Nor to the bodies of any, by malice or contempt, by ill treatment, ſevere uſage, want of compaſſion and care for their infirmities? What reputations haſt thou injured by ſcandal and cenſure; by falſe and uncharitable judgments, by buſy medling with matters that concern thee not, by officiouſly ſpreading, or too haſtily believing, ill reports; by encouraging, repeating, and being pleaſed with detracting, or by ſevere reflections? Or if by none of theſe, yet at leaſt by neglecting to reprove, or diſcountenance a ſlanderous tongue, and to deliver the innocent from its ſecret ſtabs? [*Here again be particular in any other ſins you have been guilty of againſt your neighbour.*] Turn thy eyes inward once more; and behold the breaches of that duty thou oweſt to thyſelf; the intemperance and irregularity of thy deſires; the murmurings and diſcontents; the infirmities indulged; the paſſions unſubdued; the negligence in thy greateſt concern;

the love of unlawful and the abuſe of lawful diverſions and delights. Theſe are things ſo incident to our ſtate, that no man's conſcience can ſpeak peace to him in them all: and happy art thou in thoſe where thine condemns thee not. But know withal that God is greater than thy heart and knoweth all things. He keeps exact account of thy lurking corruptions, and ſecret faults; the unobſerved, or the long ſince forgotten, miſdemeanours of thy life. The black catalogue whereof, could they be ſet before thee, would give a diſmal proſpect, full of horror and confuſion, and intolerable amazement. So that thou muſt of neceſſity acknowledge thyſelf a maſs of filth and miſery; a wretch, that if God ſhould enter into judgment with thee, haſt reaſon to expect nothing better than indignation and fury; to be ſet up as a mark of his vengeance, and, by ſome ſwift exemplary deſtruction, ſwept violently away into the hotteſt flames of hell.

Thus much I am ſadly ſenſible of, and do ſtand condemned out of my own mouth. And thus far the circumſtances of all mankind are the ſame, that if God ſhould be extreme to mark what is done amiſs, the very beſt of us all could not abide it. But bleſſed be God, though matters are deplorable, they are not quite deſperate for there is mercy with him, and his juſtice is ſatisfied. The price and purchaſe of our ſouls is paid; our forfeited lives are ranſomed and redeemed; our ranſom in value exceeds the whole world; even his own beloved and only begotten ſon; who ſpared not

his

his own life, but willingly poured out his ſoul to death; and is thereby become a ſacrifice and atonement for the ſins of wretched mortals. He hath publiſhed glad tidings of reconciliation and repentance of pardon and peace. He came to ſave ſinners even the chief of ſinners. Our God willeth not the death of any; provided they believe, and ſincerely obey him; not according to the ſhekel of the ſanctuary, which requires unſinning perfection; but after the ſtandard of the new covenant, which allows for human frailties, accepts ſorrow for the paſt, amendment for the time to come, a fervent love of God, and honeſt endeavours to ſerve him. This is a ſaying worthy to be accepted indeed; this is the comfort and confidence of poor returning ſinners. And, while I can ſee by faith the penalty of eternal damnation releaſed, by virtue of the blood of this lamb of God ſlain to take away the ſins of the world, I will ſubmit with patience to the temporal puniſhments inflicted by my provoked God; and thankfully accept the ſickneſſes and afflictions of this preſent life, as ſo many warnings and calls to repentance.

And ſure, my ſoul, we ſhall take care to make this good uſe of them. For theſe are the diſcipline of the lord: and if after all that is come upon me for my evil deeds, and for my great treſpaſs; ſeeing that thou, my God, haſt puniſhed me leſs than my iniquities deſerve; if I ſhould again break thy commandments, thou wouldeſt certainly be angry, till thou hadſt utterly conſumed me, and torment

me

me ſo much the more, for neglecting ſo great a ſalvation. I take therefore this chaſtiſement with all poſſible ſubmiſſion: and do with unfeigned ſorrow, confeſs my manifold offences. I implore thy mercy who art juſtly diſpleaſed with me; and ſince in the midſt of life we are in death, I cry earneſtly to thee for ſuccour; and beg that howſoever thou thinkeſt fit to diſpoſe of this corruptible body, thou wouldeſt look graciouſly upon me in thy ſon, and not deliver my poor ſoul into the bitter pains of eternal death; but pity and ſave me for Chriſt Jeſus his ſake. *Amen.*

[Here may be repeated the 38th and 51ſt Pſalm.]

[Then the confeſſion in the communion ſervice.]

Almighty God, the father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, maker of all things, *&c.*

[Or elſe the three prayers at the end of the commination.]

O Lord we beſeech thee, *&c.*

O moſt mighty God, *&c.*

Turn thou me, O good Lord, *&c.*

[After either of which ſay as follows.]

PRAYER.

O Moſt merciful God, who according to the multitude of thy mercies, doſt ſo put away the ſins of thoſe who truly repent, that thou remembereſt them no more; grant me, I beſeech thee, true repentance, and thy holy ſpirit;

ſpirit; and then open thine eye of mercy upon my languiſhing condition, and give me the comfort of pardon and forgiveneſs. Renew in me, moſt loving father, whatſoever hath been decayed by the fraud and malice of the devil, or by my own carnal will and frailneſs. Preſerve and continue me in the unity of the church; guard me by thy power from all the aſſaults of the tempter, and ſuffer him not to take advantage of my weakneſs. Conſider, I beſeech thee, my contrition, accept my tears, hear my own prayers, and thoſe of others on my behalf, and aſſwage my pains, as ſhall ſeem to thee moſt expedient for me. In thy mercy, O Lord, I put my full truſt; in thy mercy alone, and in the merits and ſufferings of my crucified ſaviour. Impute not, O Lord, unto me my former ſins, but ſtrengthen me with thy bleſſed ſpirit; and whenever thou art pleaſed to take me hence, take me into thy favour, through the merits of thy dearly beloved ſon, Jeſus Chriſt, our Lord. *Amen.*

MEDITATION IV.

Of the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of God.

WERE there no other conſideration to compoſe the mind, but that alone of our ſufferings being juſt, this ſhould in reaſon perſuade meekneſs, and patience, and contentedneſs under them. For, as the prophet Jeremiah urges very well; "Wherefore doth a mortal man complain, even a man for the puniſhment of his ſins?" The thief upon the croſs notwithſtanding

withſtanding all the hardening of his former profligate life, yet pacified himſelf under his pains, and reproved his reviling companion with this reflection, that they were under that "condemnation juſtly, and received but the due reward of their evil deeds;" but we have yet abundantly more, to quiet our repining thoughts, and ſilence all complaints; when the ſharpneſs of an affliction or the ſufferings of a ſick-bed would provoke us to impatience. Our ſins have been many and great enough to make God our enemy, and do cry but too loud for the utmoſt rigour of his vengeance; yet are not theſe adverſities the wounds and bruiſes of an enemy but the chaſtiſement of a father. One that ſmites us indeed, but it is to reprove and reform us. Obſerve what heavenly comforts the apoſtle hath left behind, and how God himſelf hath explained the nature and intent of his own diſpenſations. "My ſon deſpiſe thou not the chaſtening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked by him. For whom the Lord loveth he chaſteneth, and ſcourgeth every ſon whom he receiveth. If ye endure chaſtening, God dealeth with you as with ſons; for what ſon is he whom the father chaſteneth not? Furthermore, we have had fathers of our fleſh which corrected us, and we have given them reverence; ſhall we not much rather be in ſubjection to the father of ſpirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chaſtened us for their own pleaſure, but he for our profit, that we might be made partakers of his holineſs. Now no chaſtening for the preſent ſeemeth to be joyous, but grievous

vous; nevertheleſs afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteouſneſs, unto them that are exerciſed thereby."

What now can more illuſtrate the wiſdom of providence, than the converting our bittereſt calamities into occaſions of our virtue and happineſs? And which of all our calamities is more likely to contribute to our reformation, than thoſe of ſickneſs and pain? For theſe by touching our own perſons, are moſt ſenſible and grievous to be borne, and by puniſhing the body, for the ſake and ſervice of which, moſt, if not all, our wickedneſſes are committed, they meet with the cauſe and go to the root of the diſeaſe, and ſo are beſt fitted to perfect the cure. Our phyſician of ſouls is both ſkilful and kind, he will not give us over out of a cruel indulgence to our own eaſe, our father anſwers his character, and gives a ſeaſonable correction to prevent our utter undoing. But in all this there is the prudence of the phyſician mixed with the tenderneſs of the parent. The one would not preſcribe the bitter cup, unleſs he knew it neceſſary and beſt for us; and, if our circumſtances call for correction, it is with gentleneſs and reluctancy, with pain and yearning of bowels, that the other ſcourges.

Do thou therefore, O my ſoul, conſider, who chuſes for thee, and learn to reſign thyſelf to his diſpoſals; for they are the appointments of one, who is wiſer than thou, and who loves thee better than the tendereſt mother could. Do likewiſe conſider, why he chuſes thus, and learn to improve under the ſeeming harſhneſs

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of ſuch diſpenſations. Take gladly the wholeſome phyſick, and ſecure a good operation to thyſelf. Have no deſires or wiſhes of thy own; but with a conſtant reſerve to the good pleaſure of God, think, and be aſſured, that what he does is beſt. Beſt in itſelf, and beſt for thee too, if thy own fault obſtruct it not. Alas! we know not what to pray for as we ought, and ſhould therefore beg nothing poſitively, but that God would do what he ſees moſt expedient. Aſk, therefore, my ſoul, that he would make thee an inſtrument of his own glory; that he would ſupport thee in theſe trials, and not ſuffer thee to be tempted above that thou art able; that he would command all things to work together for thy good; and for the reſt take thy ſaviour for thy pattern, and, as often as thou prayeſt, that the cup may paſs from thee, be ſure forget not to add, from the very bottom of thy ſoul, nevertheleſs, O father, not my will, but thine be done.

And, to render the cup thou art now drinking, as little unpalatable as may be, forget not alſo to ſuſtain thyſelf with the comforts even of thy weakeſt condition. Seriouſly obſerve how gracious the Lord is, how he hath not only ſpared, when thou haſt deſerved puniſhment, but in the very midſt of his wrath hath thought upon mercy. If thy pains be not perpetual, thank him for thy intervals of eaſe and refreſhment. If they be not acute and extreme, thank him for the abatement and moderation of them. If thou can'ſt recruit thy feeble ſpirits with ſleep, thank him for cloſing up thy eyes,

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eyes, in gentle reviving ſlumbers; if he hold thy eyes waking, thank him for the opportunities of meditating and praying to him in the night ſeaſon. Yea thank him, eſpecially for continuing to thee thy underſtanding and thy ſenſes; and, that he hath given thee power and grace to make a good and holy uſe of a larger opportunity of preparing, for that important change, which, not this languiſhing body of thine only, but alſo all thoſe thou leaveſt behind in full health, and beauty, and vigour, muſt ſhortly undergo. If thou endureſt much, conſider, this is a good method of weaning thy affections from the world, and making thee thirſt and pant more earneſtly after the laſting joys of a better place. If the tedious lingring diſtemper aſſault, and almoſt weary out thy patience, think how much rather this is to be choſen, than the raging phrenſies of a fever or the ſudden ſtroke of an apoplexy. Reflect upon the condition of thoſe wretches who are ſnatched out of the world, it may be in an act of damning ſin; but however in an inſtant, without ſo much as the power, or the leiſure, to ſeek pardon or peace, to commit their ſoul to God, or ſo much as once implore his mercy at the laſt gaſp. O! what would they have given, how much more would they gladly have endured, to purchaſe this long warning, theſe ſlow and ſolemn approaches of death, the happy advantages thou now enjoyeſt, of trimming thy lamp, and putting thy ſoul in readineſs to meet the bridegroom at his coming? For tho' we ought indeed to expect him every hour, even in our moſt

moſt confirmed health; yet well it is for that ſervant, who receives expreſs notice of his maſter's approach, and takes care ſo to provide for it, as in zealous prayers and eager wiſhes to go out to meet him; and having on the wedding garment, waits only for his laſt call to enter with him to the marriage.

EJACULATIONS.

WHY art thou ſo heavy, O my ſoul, and why art thou ſo diſquieted within me? ſtill put thy truſt in God, for I will yet give him thanks, who is the help of my countenance and my God.

The Lord hath chaſtened and corrected me; but he hath not given me over to deſtruction. I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right: and that thou of very faithfulneſs haſt cauſed me to be troubled.

It is of the Lord's mercies, that I am not long ago conſumed: becauſe his compaſſions fail me not.

The Lord is my portion ſaith my ſoul, therefore will I hope in him.

It is good for a man, that he ſhould conſtantly hope and quietly wait for the ſalvation of the Lord; for the Lord will not caſt off for ever.

But though he cauſe grief, yet he will have compaſſion according to the multitude of his mercies.

Yea like as a father pitieth his own children, even ſo is the Lord merciful unto them that fear him.

For,

For, I know, that with thee there is mercy: and with my God is plenteous redemption.

In the multitude of ſorrows, which I have in my heart, thy comforts have refreſhed my ſoul.

O remember not my old ſins, but have mercy upon me, and that ſoon, for I am come to great miſery.

Heal my ſoul which hath ſinned againſt thee, and then let the Lord do what ſeemeth him good.

Glory be to the father, and to the ſon, *&c.*

As it was in the beginning, *&c.*

PRAYER.

HEAR me, almighty and moſt merciful God and ſaviour, extend thy accuſtomed goodneſs to me thy poor ſervant, now caſt upon this bed of languiſhing, and grieved with ſickneſs. Sanctify, I beſeech thee, this thy fatherly correction, to me, and grant that I may receive it, with all the patience and ſubmiſſion of a dutiful child. I deſire to acknowledge and adore thy divine wiſdom and goodneſs, in every diſpenſation of providence towards me; and only beg, that thou would'ſt keep me ſafe under all, and then uſe what methods thou pleaſeſt to bring me to thyſelf. Manifeſt thy ſtrength in my weakneſs. Make even my feeble condition an inſtrument of thy glory; and the more my outward man decayeth, ſtrengthen me, I beſeech thee, ſo much the more continually, with thy grace and holy ſpirit in the inner man. Let the ſenſe of my weakneſs add ſtrength to my

my faith, and ſeriouſneſs to my repentance, that if it be thy good pleaſure to reſtore me to my former health, I may lead the reſidue of my life in thy fear, and to thy glory; or elſe grant me to take thy viſitation, that, after this painful life is ended, I may dwell with thee in life everlaſting. For this, O Lord, is the chief, the moſt earneſt deſire of my ſoul; that whether I live, I may live unto the Lord; or whether I die, I may die unto the Lord, ſo that living and dying I may be thine, through Jeſus Chriſt my dear and only ſaviour. *Amen.*

MEDITATION.

Upon Recovery from Sickneſs.

IF dangers and diſtreſſes awaken our conſideration, the deliverance from them ought not to paſs unobſerved. The judgments of God extort complaints from us; and ſhall his mercies be received in ſilence? when he afflicts and wounds we ſeek him early; and ſhall we forget him when he refreſhes and heals us? That ſure were moſt unworthy and moſt reproachful. The rather ſo, becauſe we are able to give ourſelves a very plain and rational account, how it came to paſs that we receive evil at the hand of God; but the good he vouchſafes us, furniſhes juſt matter, no leſs of wonder than of thankfulneſs. Death is the puniſhment of ſin; the diſeaſes and decays of our bodies are ſo many degrees of and advances toward that death: and our conſciences can find no difficulty in juſtifying thoſe painful diſpenſations

ſations. For none of us can deſcend into his own breaſt, without diſcovering infinite perſonal offences, which might provoke God to take this forfeited life, and cut us off in the midſt of our days. But when he forbears to do ſo, when he checks his wrath, and ſuſpends the execution of that fatal ſentence gone out againſt us; we can diſcern no reaſon for this in ourſelves, but muſt reſolve it all into the ſole, the undeſerved goodneſs of our compaſſionate and long ſuffering Lord.

And ſuch my ſoul, is now thy caſe. Thou wert haſtening apace to the regions of the dead, and in fear that thou ſhould'ſt be deprived of the reſidue of thy years. But when thou was almoſt "cut off with pining ſickneſs, and thine eyes even failed with looking upward;" when thou "reckonedeſt each night and morning," that there would be "an end of thee" upon earth, then did the Lord ſtand by thee and "ſave thee," even becauſe "he had a favour unto thee."

Now, though this be thy condition common to all mankind, that we contribute no part to the efficient or meritorious cauſe of ſuch goodneſs; yet in the final cauſe we may and muſt bear a very conſiderable part. We could not give the bleſſing to ourſelves: we could not deſerve that almighty God ſhould give it us: but it will lie upon us to take care that ſuch grace be not beſtowed in vain. In one reſpect indeed, and ſtrictly ſpeaking, neither this, nor any other of the diſpenſations of providence, can poſſibly be in vain. For ſome effect they will of neceſſity

ceſſity have, even with regard to us. But if they do not anſwer the good purpoſes, for which they were deſigned; better were it for us that we had never received them at all. The lengthening out our days, if we do not amend our manners, is but the miniſtering freſh and large opportunities of adding yet more to our ſins here, and to our torments hereafter. And happier it had been, to have been ſwept away with a ſwift deſtruction, than to be delivered from our fears, and live ſuch a life afterwards as is certain to render us more miſerable in the end. For every mercy, every eſcape, muſt be accounted for; and thoſe which are entertained unthankfully will at length prove curſes inſtead of bleſſings to us. It will therefore become thee, my ſoul, very ſeriouſly to conſider, wherein true thankfulneſs conſiſts, and what are the inſtances by which it muſt be expreſſed.

When men do any acts of kindneſs to each other, the receiver eſteems himſelf obliged to pay them back again, in ſome ſervice or benefit as good. This is what men cannot be excuſed from; provided fit opportunities offer, and their circumſtances enable them to do it. But when the power of doing thus is wanting, we are ſenſible, that ſo much as falls ſhort in procuring a friend's real advantage, ought to be made up in all becoming teſtimonies of reſpect; in ſuch a readineſs of mind as plainly ſhews, that the party does not however want the will and hearty deſire of returning ſuch favours in kind, and to the full.

Now

Now the ſame rule of equity muſt needs hold towards our great benefactor in heaven. He is indeed ſo great, that his all-ſufficiency can neither need, nor receive any addition. And we are ſo very poor and impotent that it were the extremity of vanity and madneſs to imagine ourſelves capable of adding to him. The utmoſt we can do is to demean ourſelves that he and all the world, may plainly perceive us duly ſenſible of his bounty. Now this can be demonſtrated only by our conſtant and zealous care, to pleaſe and honour him, by taking delight in the obedience, he hath enjoined us, and teſtifying, by our practice, that we eſteem the ſervice of ſo liberal a maſter, our reaſonable duty and perfect freedom. Although therefore our lips ought to ſet forth the praiſe of the Lord, and his kindneſs ſhould ever be in our mouths; yet are thoſe praiſes never ſet forth effectually, yet is that kindneſs never acknowledged as it ought, except our lives and every action publiſh it. The profeſſions of gratitude are of no conſideration in any caſe, farther than they expreſs the inward ſentiments of the heart. That heart cannot be truly grateful which does not labour and ſtuddy by all proper means to approve itſelf to the perſon, whoſe debtor it is. And how this is to be done to almighty God, his own word hath informed us; by declaring that the man who truly honours him, will order his converſation aright: that they who love him, will give teſtimony of their affliction, by keeping his commandments; that the goodneſs and forbearance of God, does (both in its natural

tural and deſigned tendency) lead to repentance; that even conſtrains men to live no longer to themſelves, but to him who hath done ſo great things for them.

Theſe are reflections ſo ſelf-evident, ſo very obvious and natural to every man, that ſeldom are any remarkable calamities undergone or deliverances obtained, without exciting them in our minds.

Few wretches are ſo hardened in wickedneſs, few ſo abandoned, and loſt to all ſenſe of God and goodneſs; but in the ſeaſons of ſickneſs and danger, they ſee their paſt follies with diſpleaſure, and diſcern the reaſonableneſs of forſaking them. But this is the general unhappineſs, this the great fault of moſt men, that ſuch remorſe quickly wears off, and their good intentions cool again. The ſmart of the rod ceaſes, and the ſucceſs of the correction is loſt with it. The health of the body grows more confirmed, and the conſcience hardens in proportion to the conſtitution. And thus the man returns to his old vanities and vices with the ſame unconcernedneſs as before.

But, O my ſoul, let it not be thus with me. No? Let me look back with a great ſerioufneſs, upon the vows I made, when I was in trouble; and conſider, that theſe were not to be tranſient and occaſional reſolutions; that they were intended for laſting obligations, and cannot be ſincerely diſcharged, unleſs they influence the remainder of that life, ſo graciouſly reſtored to me. I ought to look upon myſelf, as one raiſed from the dead, and favoured with life a ſecond

time; that from henceforth I might employ and uſe the gift to the honour of the giver, who hath thus, as it were, created me afreſh. He ſaw it better upon my requeſt, to continue me longer in this ſtate of trial; and I ought to give the more earneſt heed, that every day added to my paſt years may prove a higher advance in piety and virtue; that none of my holy purpoſes languiſh or die, as too many have formerly done; that this late approach to the grave may perpetually warn me of my mortality; and that, whenever death and judgment ſhall actually overtake me, (as overtake me they moſt certainly will) I may not be found leſs provided to meet my Lord than his laſt ſummons left me.

For, can I reflect upon my late weakneſs, and harbour an imagination ſo vain, as that this body, in its greateſt vigour, may promiſe itſelf an everlaſting continuance? Can I obſerve this youth of mine renewed as the eagle's, and attribute it to any other cauſe; than the almighty power and infinite goodneſs of him, who wounds and heals, who kills and makes alive, after the counſel of his own will? Can I acknowledge my preſent recovery owing intirely to that power and goodneſs, and not diſcover the indiſpenſable engagements which lie upon me, to make ſome ſuitable return; and what return is poſſible, what ſo proper, ſo acceptable, as that of a thankful heart; a diligent improvement of this mercy; a life in every part of it, entirely dedicated to him, who hath ſtrengthened

ed his title now yet more, and made it upon ſo many accounts his own.

I will therefore be frequently acting of over again thoſe ſolemn exerciſes of repentance performed in the bitterneſs of my ſoul; and by the repetition ſhew, that the good thoughts I entertained, continue to be the calm and ſettled ſenſe of my more compoſed mind. I will ſtrictly examine, what faults committed, what duties neglected, or but ſlightly performed, what abuſes or what failures in a right improvement of health heretofore, might probably have provoked God, to caſt me on the bed of ſickneſs, and reduce me to ſuch extremity of ſuffering. I will thank the Lord for giving me warning by this affliction; but eſpecially for touching and ſoftening my heart, and inſpiring me with a godly ſorrow, and holy purpoſes. And to my own endeavours, I will add my moſt fervent prayers, that the continuance of his grace may, out of his painful chaſtiſement, produce the peaceable and bleſſed fruits of righteouſneſs, and faithful perſeverance. To this end I will not fail, frequently to renew my good reſolutions, to cheriſh and keep up in my ſoul all heavenly diſpoſitions, by conſtant private prayer and ſerious reflections; by attending duly upon the publick worſhip; by reading, and hearing, and conſcientiouſly applying God's holy word to my preſent circumſtances and neceſſities; by letting ſlip none of the precious opportunities for ſtrengthening my faith and other chriſtian virtues in the ſacrament of my dear redeemer's body and blood. I will take heed to all my

ways, be upon my guard againſt all temptations and occaſions of ſinning, moderate in my moſt lawful pleaſures and enjoyments, and diligent in all my duties, which the ſeveral relations wherein I ſtand, and the ſtate of life, to which I am appointed by providence, require of me. "I will ſet a watch before my mouth, and keep the door of my lips that I offend not in my tongue." I will take heed, that I hurt not any man, by thought word or deed; but will extend my charity, as I am able to all mankind; to the poor diſtreſſed members of my bleſſed ſaviour, by ſuch ſuccours, as their condition ſtands in need of, and mine qualifies me to give: to others by my good advice and ſeaſonable inſtruction; to all, by my prayers and good wiſhes, and the powerful motive of a pious example; and even to my enemies by meekneſs and forgiveneſs, even as God for Chriſt's ſake, hath had compaſſion upon me. I will make it my buſineſs to become every day more in love with religion; and to make all with whom I converſe ſo; that I may in ſome meaſure, give a check to the abominations of this degenerate age in which I live and adorn the doctrine of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, or at leaſt to ſave myſelf from this untoward generation. In a word, I will be ſure that the ſenſe of God's mercies (of this laſt in particular) may never depart out of my mind; but live, and grow, and bring forth fruit, and influence me powerfully, to the very laſt hour of my life.

Nor think my ſoul, that any reſolutions can be too ſtrict, any endeavours too much upon this

this occaſion. For after " all that is come upon me for my evil deeds, and for my great treſpaſs, ſeeing that my God hath puniſhed me leſs than my iniquities deſerve, and hath given me ſuch a deliverance as this; ſhould I again break his commandments, would he not then be angry with me till he had conſumed me, ſo that there ſhould be no eſcaping; O Lord my God, thou art righteous, for I remain yet eſcaped." But let not, I beſeech thee, this mercy, by being forgotten or abuſed, turn to my utter and eternal condemnation. For that this muſt be the ſad conſequence of ſuch ingratitude at laſt, not only thy word hath told me, but I can plainly gather from my own reaſons and experience. I feel what indignation the unkindneſs of perſons, whom I have particularly obliged, kindles in my breaſt; I find, that no ſort of reſentment is more uneaſy, no provocation harder to be borne, than that, which ariſes from the injuries and affronts of thoſe unworthy people, who preſume upon my friendſhip to uſe me ill. And can I ſuppoſe that the juſt and jealous God will not call them to a ſevere account, who turn his grace into wantonneſs, and, when they live by miracles of bounty and long-ſuffering, live ſo as to diſhonour him, and reproach the patience that ſpares them? The more ſignal and particular his goodneſs hath been the heavier and more inſupportable, no doubt, will be that " wrath, which hardened and impenitent wretches treaſure up to themſelves againſt the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of

God." So that our bleſſed Lord's admonition to the impotent man, is in effect the voice of reaſon, and every man's own Conſcience. Each affliction, each eſcape calling out loudly to the receiver. "Sin no more leſt a worſe thing come unto thee."

And how indeed can it be expected, that infinitely worſe ſhould not come, when neither ſeverity will drive, nor compaſſion, and kindneſs lead to amendment; when neither their correcting, nor ſparing, can do any good? The circumſtances of thoſe men are dangerous, whoſe diſtemper only is ſtrong: but theirs muſt need's be deſperate and mortal, whoſe very remedies feed and inflame their diſeaſe. If pruning and manuring be both in vain, the next ſentence upon the barren fig-tree, is, cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground.

The ax is already laid to the root of the tree, and if it be lifted up to give the fatal ſtroke, the end of every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit, we are expreſsly told ſhall be, to be burnt with unquenchable fire.

Theſe things and ſundry others which will be apt on ſuch occaſions to offer themſelves, if applied well and warmly to my conſcience, will have a great and happy force, informing my diſpoſition, and regulating my conduct for the time to come. The recollection of God's abundant mercies will inflame my breaſt with holy gratitude and fervent love; ſuch as would ever keep me paſſionately deſirous, to pay the juſt tribute of my beſt ſervice in return, and chearfully to run the way of his commandments.

The

The remembrance of his judgments will poſſeſs me with an awful fear of diſpleaſing him, and convince me, by my own experience, that no fleſh can ſtand before him when he is angry. My late languiſhings and feeble condition will be a ſeaſonable and lively admonition, what this frail mortal nature is; theſe will teach to die daily to the world, as a perſon who hath here no continuing city, but ought to ſeek one to come; a perſon, who muſt not, from even the moſt confirmed health, entertain any ſuch fond proſpects and vain confidences of long life, as may tempt me to preſume death and judgment at a great diſtance, and myſelf ſecured againſt any ſurpriſe from them: much rather ought I to expect them every moment; and, both by the daily ſpectacles of mortality in my neighbours, and the ſenſible decays, or ſudden changes which happen to myſelf, quicken my preparation to meet that Lord, who hath compared himſelf to a thief in the night, and foretold us, that he "will come in ſuch an hour as we think not." Thus ſhall I, by a true chriſtian prudence, extract ſpiritual advantage out of temporal evils, diſcern the goodneſs and wiſdom of providence, even in the moſt afflicting diſpenſations; convert the pains and diſeaſes of a vile periſhing body, into inſtruments of ſtrength and health to my immortal ſoul, and have a happy occaſion of acknowledging, with David, that it is good for me to have been in trouble, ſince by that I have learnt, more diligently to practiſe, more ſtedfaſtly to perſevere, in the ſtatutes of my God.

HYMN.

PRAISE the Lord, O my ſoul; and all that is within me praiſe his holy name.

Praiſe the Lord, O my ſoul: and forget not all his benefits.

Who can expreſs the noble acts of the Lord: or ſhew forth his praiſe.

Which forgiveth all thy ſins and healeth all thine infirmities,

Which ſaveth thy life from deſtruction; and crowneth thee with mercy and loving kindneſs,

Which ſatisfieth thy mouth with good things: making thee young and luſty as an eagle;

For his arrows ſtick faſt in me: and his hand preſſed ſore.

There was no health in my fleſh, becauſe of his diſpleaſure: neither was there any reſt in my bones, by reaſon of my ſin.

My ſoul abhorred all manner of meat: and I was even hard at death's door.

Then cried I unto thee, O Lord, and got me to my Lord right humbly.

I ſaid, O my God, take me not away in the midſt of mine age: as for thy years they endure throughout all generations.

But what profit is there in my blood when I go down into the pit.

Hear my prayer then, O Lord, and with thine ears conſider my calling: hold not thy peace at my tears.

O ſpare me a little that I may recover my ſtrength: before I go hence and be no more ſeen.

So

So when I cried unto the Lord in my trouble, he delivered me out of diſtreſs.

He ſent his word and healed me, and I was ſaved from my deſtruction.

O! what great troubles and adverſities haſt thou ſhewed me, and yet didſt thou turn and quicken me: yea, and broughteſt me from the deep of the earth again.

Therefore will I praiſe thee and thy faithfulneſs, O God, I will offer unto my God thankſgiving, and pay my vows unto the moſt high:

For the grave cannot praiſe thee, death cannot celebrate thee: they that go down to the pit cannot declare thy truth.

But the living, the living, he ſhall praiſe thee, as I do this day: the father to the children ſhall make known the goodneſs of the Lord.

And they that know thy name will put their truſt in thee; for thou Lord haſt never failed them that ſeek thee.

As for me, I will give great thanks unto the Lord with my mouth: and praiſe him among the multitude.

O come hither and hearken all ye that fear God, and I will tell you what he hath done for my ſoul,

I was in miſery and like to him that is at the point to die; but he delivered me out of all my fear.

If the Lord had not helped me, it had not failed but my ſoul had been put to ſilence.

But when I ſaid my foot hath ſlipped: thy mercy, O Lord held me up.

Thou haſt turned my heavineſs into Joy: thou haſt put off my ſackcloth and girded me with gladneſs.

The Lord is my ſtrength and my ſhield: my heart hath truſted in him, and I am delivered: therefore my heart danceth for joy, and in my ſong will I praiſe him.

O how plentiful is thy goodneſs which thou haſt laid up for them that love thee: and that thou haſt prepared for them that put their truſt in thee, even before the ſons of men.

O ye that love the lord, ſee that ye hate the thing which is evil: the lord preſerveth the ſouls of the faithful, de delivereth them from the hand of the wicked one.

His mercy and truth ſhall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the houſe of the Lord for ever.

I will keep the ways of the Lord, and will not forſake my God as the wicked doth.

For I have an eye unto all his Laws: and will not caſt out his commandments from me.

Praiſed be the Lord, who had not caſt out my prayer: nor turned his mercy from me:

Yea bleſſed be the Lord God, even the God of Iſrael: which only doth wondrous things.

And bleſſed be the name of his majeſty for ever, and let all the earth be filled with his majeſty. *Amen. Amen.*

Glory be to the father, and to the ſon, and to the holy ghoſt.

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever ſhall be, world without end. *Amen.*

[After

[After this hymn, the reader may enlarge his meditations to the ſame purpoſe, by repeating the 30th, 71ſt, 77th, 106th, and 108th *Pſalms*,]

PRAYER.

O Moſt mighty God and merciful father, wonderful in thy doings, and gracious in all thy diſpenſations towards the children of men; I thy unworthy ſervant proſtrate myſelf before thee, with all the fervent affections of a grateful breaſt, acknowledging it thy goodneſs, that I am not long ago conſumed. Thou Lord haſt chaſtened and corrected me, but thou haſt not given me over to death. Bleſſed therefore be that divine wiſdom, which ſaw this late affliction ſeaſonably, and would not ſuffer me to periſh in my folly, for want of ſuch neceſſary warning. Bleſſed be that tender compaſſion, which in the midſt of wrath remembered mercy, which made all my bed in my ſickneſs, which paſſed by my impatience, and many infirmities; and inclined a willing ear to the wandering and diſcompoſed ſupplications of a poor feeble wretch, when he cried unto thee in his extreme anguiſh and diſtreſs. Bleſſed be the powerful influences of that grace, which diſpoſed my heart to conſideration and repentance; but above all, bleſſed for ever be that power and goodneſs, which, by ſparing me, when I deſerved to be utterly cut off, hath given me opportunity to make good theſe holy reſolutions, which thy grace inſpired, when I was in trouble. Lord, let this goodneſs of thine, and my own ſerious purpoſes of amendment, never ſlip out of

of my mind: but preſerve in me a conſtant tender ſenſe of the indiſpenſable obligations I lie under to better obedience. Make me every day more and more zealous in promoting thy glory, and the good of my brethren: as a perſon ſaved from deſtruction, for this very end, that the remainder of my life ſhould be employed in the ſervice of my gracious deliverer. In this ſenſe, O my God, I humbly offer and preſent unto thee this ſoul and body, reſcued from hell and the grave; beſeeching thee to keep them thine for ever. O let not the return of my health produce a relapſe into my former ſins; but become an inſtrument of thy greater honour, of my own ſtricter and more ſtedfaſt virtue here, and my more exquiſite happineſs hereafter, O! that the talents of time and ability to do good, which have been heretofore ſo wretchedly neglected, may (now they are afreſh committed to my truſt) be for the time to come, ſo faithfully improved, that the ſhining graces of an examplary converſation, may hold ſome proportion with the bleſſings, I have been ſo particularly favoured withal. Let theſe excite not me only, but others alſo, by my example, to love thee more fervently, to ſerve thee more chearfully, to truſt in thee more aſſuredly. In thee O Lord, who ſheweſt us thy goodneſs ſo plenteouſly, and daily poureſt thy benefits upon us: in thee, who never faileſt nor forſakeſt them that ſeek thee: in thee, whoſe mercies are ſweet, whoſe loving kindneſs is better than life itſelf; whoſe ſervice is perfect freedom, and

in

in keeping whoſe commandments there is exceeding great reward.

To this end, ſanctify, I beſeech thee, all the methods of thy providence to the ſalvation of my immortal ſoul; and eſpecially, let not thy abuſed mercies riſe up in judgment againſt me. O! may my paſt ſufferings work in me a great humility and godly fear; that from them I may confirm myſelf in faith and patience, and an entire reſignation to thy will, and wiſer choices for me. Bring back frequently to my remembrance the promiſes and ſupplications, poured out in the bitterneſs of my ſoul; that thoſe ſucceſsful addreſſes to the throne of grace may ſtir me up effectually, to the paying what I then ſo ſolemnly vowed. Open thou my lips, O Lord, that my mouth may declare thy mercy and truth as long as I live, and praiſe my God while I have any being. And for as much as this recovery is only lengthening out a little that ſpan of life, which muſt ſhortly have an end; ſuffer me not, I pray thee, to forget, that I am a ſtranger upon earth; but help me ſo to diſengage my heart from theſe things here below, which, (my own late experience hath taught me) cannot profit in the day of wrath; that my hopes and affections may be unalterably fixed upon theſe better and eternal treaſures, which thou haſt prepared for them that love thee. Let the thoughts and certain expectations of death and judgment be ſo conſtantly, ſo powerfully preſent to my ſoul, that, in what hour ſoever my Lord ſhall come, I may be found ready to meet him, and to go in with him

him to the marriage. Even ſo, bleſſed Jeſus, grant me in ſuch manner to paſs through things temporal, that I finally loſe not the things eternal; but that I may uſe and improve thy grace here, till grace at laſt be ſwallowed up in glory, and I tranſlated to my maſter's joy. All which I beg for thy own merits ſake, my only mediator and redeemer; to whom with the father and holy ſpirit, be aſcribed, as is moſt due, from me and every creature, all honour and glory, dominion and power, thankſgiving and praiſe, and humble adoration, henceforth and for evermore. *Amen.*

MEDITATION VI.

On Death.

"IT is appointed for all men once to die, and after that the judgment;" ſo ſays the ſpirit of God himſelf; and what is thus appointed, none can reverſe, none can eſcape. That then, which remains for us, who lie under this ſentence, to do, is only to endeavour, that we may die, as becomes men and chriſtians; that is, as perſons, who expect to render an account of the things done in this body, and to receive a recompence accordingly, whether it be good or bad. But who may abide that day? Or who ſhall ſtand, when the Lord appeareth? who indeed; when not only the thing itſelf, but the very apprehenſions and eſpecially the approaches of it, are ſo dreadful? For what is more terrible to mortal man, than dying? And what is more ſo to ſinful man, than being judged?

judged? But yet my ſoul, ſince theſe muſt unavoidably come, let us ſee what courſe can be taken, to ſoften a little, and reconcile us to them: Nay, let us try, if it be not poſſible, not only to bear them contentedly, but even to meet them gladly.

If death be conſidered in itſelf, it is no more, than what all the living creation here below undergo, in common with ourſelves. And what is dying? It is ceaſing to live, after the manner we now do. It is a removal, or rather an eſcape, from a world of misfortunes and miſeries; of ſorrow and diſquiet; of malice and deceit; of noiſe and contention; of pains and anguiſh; of croſſes and diſappointments; of vanity and vexation; and, which is worſt of all, of temptation and ſin. It is doing that once for all, which we have done in part, a thouſand times already; by ſickneſſes and faintings; by decays and infirmities of nature, and by the loſs of the tendereſt relations, who tore away our very heart with them. In ſhort the preſent life, even to the proſperous, will be found, upon a juſt computation, to have made a very unequal diſtribution. For even ſuch have a larger portion of trouble than of happineſs. But to the generality of mankind, it is a rough tempeſtuous ſea; and death is the making their port, or at leaſt retiring into the ſhelter of a creek, where ſtorms can reach and annoy them no more. Theſe are not affected ſtrains of philoſophy, but weighed and meaſured truths: ſuch as every man is, or may be, ſadly convinced of, at his own expence. The only deceit

ceit ariſes from our natural fondneſs for living; which God hath wiſely infuſed and woven into our ſouls, that we might ſuſtain our preſent calamities the better. As, on the other hand, he hath made faith of a future ſtate our virtue, and ordained the miſeries of the preſent life, as an exerciſe for that virtue; that both together might be a ballance at leaſt againſt the objects of ſenſe; draw off our affections from a place, which was never intended for our reſt; and raiſe our deſires up to thoſe better things, provided for us in another world. And ſurely, if this matter were well weighed, however timorous nature may ſtart and boggle at firſt, yet it would be no hard matter to come cloſe up to death; and by the help of familiar practice, and prudent pious meditation, to render not only the thoughts of it, but even the thing itſelf, very tolerable to us.

But if we conſider death in another capacity, as leading and keeping us cloſe priſoners, to a juſt and terrible judgment; thus it hath a ſting indeed, which is the ſenſe of guilt and ſin unpardoned. This is what nothing can relieve, but the comforts ariſing from true repentance, from a ſaviour ſacrificed to expiate, and to make full ſatisfaction for our offences, from a title to our part of that expiation, and the favour of a reconciled God. And, theſe, I hope, are comforts which belong to me. For do but hear and obſerve (my ſoul) what reviving words the holy ſpirit hath ſpoken to this purpoſe; "If any man ſin, we have an advocate with the father, Jeſus Chriſt the righteous, and he is the pro-

propitiation for our ſins." Chriſt hath died, who is he that condemneth? yea, Chriſt is riſen again, and ſeated at the right-hand of God, a perpetual interceſſor, and a mighty ſaviour to all them that come to God by him. He hath told thee, that what the infirmity of the law and fleſh could not do Chriſt hath done for us; that he knows and hath felt our weakneſſes, and will not fail to make large and very gracious allowances for them; that Jeſus hath waſhed us in his own blood, and though our ſins be as ſcarlet, yet, upon true repentance, they ſhall be white as ſnow. Look up then, and ſee thy Lord coming in the clouds: thou muſt be judged, it is true, but thy redeemer ſhall be thy judge. And to whoſe deciſion would'ſt thou chuſe to ſtand, but to thy beſt friends? To him who loved thee ſo dearly, as to die for thee, to be made a ſin and a curſe for thee, that thou mighteſt be made the righteouſneſs of God in him? This is thy ſure confidence; and heaven and earth may paſs away, but his merits and promiſes can never fail. And he hath promiſed, that all who repent and believe, and ſerve, and love him, ſhall be ſaved in that day, and be where he is, to behold his glory; nay, not to behold only, but to enjoy it, to live and reign, with the ſon of God himſelf. For ſuch he hath made ſons, alſo heirs of God, and joint heirs with Chriſt, of an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reſerved for them in the heavens. And if I know that I love God, I know that I ſhall be with him, and be like him and ſee him as he is.

O,

O, glorious day, which ſhall bring me to the full and inſeparable enjoyment of my deareſt ſaviour and moſt merciful God, when this veil of the fleſh ſhall be done away, and ſpiritual joy, and peace, and knowledge, and love ſhall for ever abound! Bleſſed be thy name, O God, who haſt opened an entrance into ſuch bliſs for poor returning ſinners! Bleſſed be thy bounty, who haſt ordained ſuch an infinite recompence for our imperfect and unworthy labours; and, if thou haſt decreed withal, that I muſt paſs through the regions of darkneſs and death, to come at thoſe ſeats of light and glory; ſhall I grudge this paſſage? when I have borne the heat and burthen of the day, ſhall I mourn, becauſe even is come, and ſhrink back, when I am called to receive my wages?

Some difficulties I know there are: but thou O Lord wilt ſtrengthen my faith, and not ſuffer me to faint under the terrors and ſtruggles of my laſt trials. Give me grace, I pray thee, to conſider, that this is the method, by which thy own ſon was made perfect; that it is no more, nay, it is much leſs, than he ſuffered voluntarily, and for my ſake; that by ſuffering death he hath overcome it, and rendered the conflict more eaſy to them that come after. Grant me to rejoice, at leaſt to ſupport myſelf with the nearer proſpect of an eternal reſt and reward.

And do thou, O my ſoul, labour continually to ſtrengthen thy own frailties and fears, with holy meditations, with the repeated exerciſes of faith and repentance, of truſt, and love, and heavenly mindedneſs. Bid adieu to this vain world,

world, and ſhake hands with it chearfully. As for all that is uneaſy here, thank God for a deliverance from it; and for all whom thou haſt reaſon to love and be concerned for, remember that thou leaveſt them under the conduct of the ſame good providence, of which thyſelf haſt had ſo large experience. Conſider that God is all relations, and more than all, to thoſe that want them; and, if they continue to ſeek and ſerve him diligently, he will never forſake them, but be their God and their guide unto death. Bid all my friends weep, not for me, but for themſelves, who are ſtill in a ſtate of danger and temptation, of vanity and miſery; from which they that die in the Lord are for ever freed. Tell them that we ſhall ſee one another again ſhortly. As I am going now to thoſe dear and good ſouls, who have got the ſtart of me in this journey; ſo they, and I, and all God's children, ſhall have a glorious, a joyful meeting at the reſurrection of the juſt. We ſhall all go together into a place, whence tears and mourning are for ever baniſhed; where the viſion of God, the ſervice of the lamb, the company of angels and ſaints, ſhall miniſter eternal matter of praiſe and joy; and our happineſs will exceed all we can conceive, all we can hope for. And now, "O death where is thy ſting, O grave where is thy victory?" Thanks be to God, who hath given us victory, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. Therefore, my ſoul, be thou ſtedfaſt, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much

much as I am aſſured, that my labour ſhall not be in vain in the Lord.

EJACULATIONS.

WHILE I am in the body I am abſent from the Lord; for I walk by faith, not by ſight: therefore I am confident, and willing rather to be abſent from the body and to be preſent with the Lord.

Lord whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I deſire in compariſon of thee. My fleſh and my heart faileth, but God is ſtill my ſtrength, and my life, and my portion for ever.

Fearfulneſs and trembling are come upon me, and an horrible dread hath overwhelmed me. For the enemy of ſouls crieth out aloud, and the ungodly one cometh on ſo faſt; he is minded to do me ſome miſchief, ſo maliciouſly he is ſet againſt me. But I am thine, O ſave me; I am bought with a price, O Jeſus even with thy moſt precious blood. I am one of thy ſheep, rebuke this ravening wolf, for thou art greater than he, and none is able to pluck me out of thy hand.

Thou that takeſt away the ſins of the world, have mercy upon me. Thou that takeſt away the ſins of the world receive my prayer. Thou that ſitteſt on the right-hand of God have mercy upon me.

Thou Lord, art full of compaſſion and mercy, long-ſuffering, and of great goodneſs: O deal not with me after my ſins, nor reward me according to my iniquities.

Thou

Thou knoweſt wherefore we be made, and remembereſt that we are but duſt. Look graciouſly therefore upon my weakneſs; pity the interruptions, and imperfections of my prayers; pardon what I cannot now do with a ſteady and compoſed zeal, and accept the ſincerity of my heart.

Thou knoweſt Lord the ſecrets of my ſoul; ſhut not thy merciful ears to my prayers, but ſpare me, Lord moſt holy, O God moſt mighty, O holy and merciful ſaviour. Thou moſt worthy judge eternal, ſuffer me not at my laſt hour for any pains of death to fall from thee.

Faithful is he that hath ſaid. "I will never leave nor forſake thee." Lord grant me the knowledge and ſenſible experience of this moſt gracious promiſe. Stand by me, and ſave me from the reproof of him that would eat me up. Deliver my ſoul from the roaring lion, who goeth about continually, ſeeking whom he may devour.

Lord I commit my ſoul unto thee, as into the hands of a faithful creator; and moſt merciful redeemer; ſpare it, O God, and let it be thine in the day when thou makeſt up thy jewels. In the hour of death, and in the day of judgment, good Lord deliver me.

PRAYER.

O Almighty Lord, father of all mercies, and God of all comfort, I flee unto thee for ſuccour in this my great extremity; moſt humbly beſeeching thee, to ſupport and ſtrengthen me in the laſt conflict of my life. Deliver me from the

the ſnares and terrors of the wicked one; ſuſtain my agonies with the peaceful comforts of a quiet and good conſcience, and of perfect reconciliation with thee my God. Lord as thou bringeſt me nearer to thyſelf, ſo let my love, and my deſires of thee be ſtronger. And O that it may pleaſe thee in thy abundant mercy, to afford me ſome ſweet fore-taſte of future bliſs, that I may triumph even in death itſelf! But if in this I know not what I aſk; yet at leaſt ſuffer not my faith to be ſhaken, nor thy loving kindneſs to fail; and however thou dealeſt with this corruptible body; let my ſoul, I implore thee be precious in thy ſight. Waſh it in the blood of the immaculate lamb of God, that all its pollutions being purged and done away, it may be preſented pure and without ſpot before thee: and be received into thy everlaſting kingdom, through the merits and mediation of Jeſus Chriſt, thy only Son our Lord and ſaviour. *Amen.*

Short EJACULATIONS *for the laſt Extremity,*

I Believe, bleſſed Jeſus, that thou ſhalt come to be my judge; I pray thee therefore help thy ſervant whom thou haſt redeemed with thy precious blood.

O make me now to be numbered with thy ſaints in glory everlaſting.

The ſnares of death compaſs me round about, and its pains get hold upon me; haſte thee O God, to deliver me, make haſte O God to help me.

Thy

Thy kingdom come, O God, thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.

Lord Jeſus receive my ſpirit.

Come, Lord Jeſus, come quickly.

[Theſe laſt may be uſed by friends and ſtanders by, after the ſick party is diſabled from the uſe of them: but above all, if poſſible, let the conſolation of the ſick perſon be completed by receiving the Viaticum, or Lord's ſupper, in the devout partaking of which, is the ſure pledge of eternal life.]

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